

ome account of the restoration

of

he hurch of t. aryl agdalene,

anston, somerset.





OWER, ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

—  —  —  — 

*S*ome *A*ccount of the *C*hurch of *S*t. *M*ary *M*agdalene,



And the Restoration thereof:

Together with several Notices on Ecclesiastical Matters.

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD ASHBURTON,

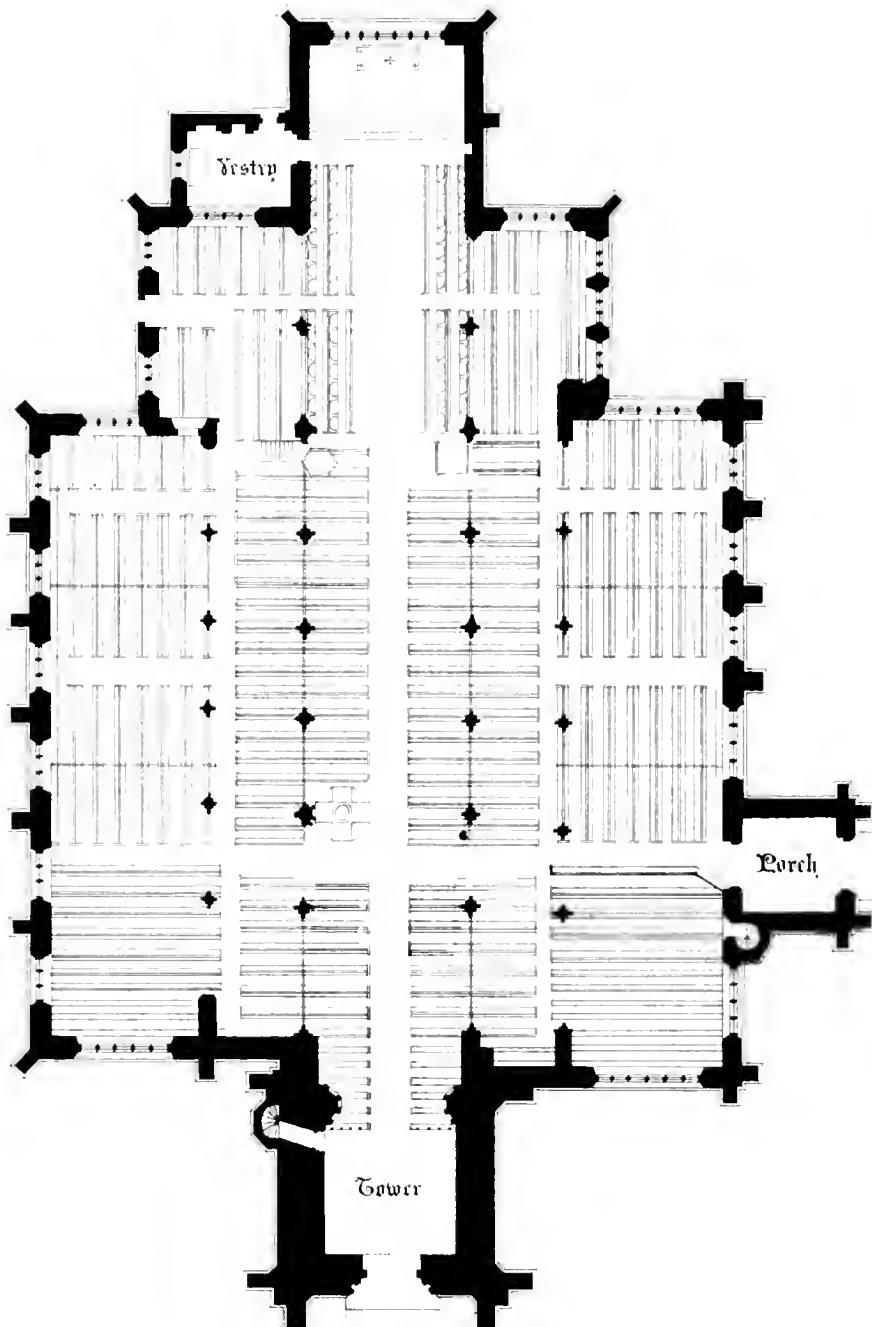
This Volume is Humbly Inscribed,

AS AN EXPRESSION OF GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR THE MANY
FAVOURS CONFERRED BY HIS LORDSHIP,

ON HIS OBEDIENT SERVANT,

JAMES COTTEL.

Taunton.



Scale of 10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 feet

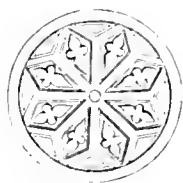
Measured and drawn
by F. T. Bellman.



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The Restoration of
the church of St. Mary Magdalene,
Taunton, Somerset.

And Chaplain to the Right Honourable Lord Ashburton



THE design of the following account of the restoration of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton, is to preserve, for the benefit of the present parishioners and after generations, a short statement of the proceedings connected with that undertaking; and also to encourage others, especially the Clergy, to similar attempts for the restoration of the houses of God. There is a difficulty in discharging this task, which I feel, having had the honour of arranging, in a great measure, the machinery by which the work has been accomplished, and being obliged therefore to introduce my own services more frequently than is agreeable either to my feelings or wishes.

On my appointment to the vicarage, in 1840, the church was found, from age and neglect, to be in a most dangerous and dilapidated condition. It was quite evident that unless something should be speedily done, divine service could not be conducted in it with safety to the congregation. Like a ship,^(a) to which indeed a church has been likened, she was being borne

^(a) Hence from the Latin *Navis*, the English *Nave*. The following passage from the apostolical constitutions will show how far this allusion to a ship was carried:—"When thou callest an assembly of the church, as one that is the commander of a great ship, appoint the assemblies to be made with all possible skill; charging the deacons, as mariners, to prepare places for the brethren, as for passengers, with all care and decency. And first, let the church be long, like a ship, looking towards the east, with its vestries on either side at the east end. In the centre let the bishop's throne be placed, and let the presbyters be seated on both sides of him; and let the deacons stand near at hand, in close, small garments, for they are like the mariners and managers of the ship, &c."—Book ii., sec. 28.

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rapidly down the stream of time, where she would soon have either entirely disappeared, or left only the wreck of her former greatness. Will no means be adopted to prevent such a catastrophe?—was the fearful question. It might have been supposed that the whole town would have arisen *en masse*, and put forth all their energies and resources to preserve so noble a fabrie. Several partial and ineffectual attempts had indeed been made to repair the edifice, or at least to do something by which the service might be performed, but these attempts were opposed by members of other communions, or, what is much worse, met with apathy and indifference from those of our own. May not this censurable conduct on the part of professed churchmen be traced up to its source, viz., the low and *dead state of religion itself?* The interest we take in the house of God and the services thereof is no fallacious standard of the progress of religion in our own hearts. In the painful position in which we were thus placed, what was to be done?

It was useless to expect that so large a sum as was necessary for its perfect restoration could be obtained by a rate from the parishioners. And to close the doors and leave a large population without the means of grace, according to the usages of the Church of England, would be productive of evils too fearful to contemplate. The only plan, therefore, that seemed to suggest itself was, to endeavour to get the parish to do as much as possible, and to undertake the rest on my own responsibility, trusting to the Great Head of the Church for His blessing and assistance to enable me to carry out such plans as would best advance the welfare of my parishioners, and most redound to His glory. Having, therefore, determined to make the attempt, I immediately expressed my views and wishes to the parishioners in the following letter, addressed to the churchwardens:—

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ I beg very respectfully to call your attention to the dilapidated state of St. Mary’s Church. We now appear to have arrived at that crisis in its history when all feel that something must be done, if we would preserve it from utter ruin. The subject has given me much serious and anxious consideration. I have dreaded, on the one hand, asking the parish for such a heavy sum as would be required to repair and restore it; I have feared, on the other, to engage in so vast an undertaking entirely on my own responsibility. In order to steer between these difficulties, I venture to state, provided the parish will put the roofs and windows in a proper state, and do all other necessary repairs, that I will undertake to new seat the church in wainscot, by which nearly 400 additional sittings will be obtained; to put in a rich stained-glass eastern window; and adopt such other improvements and alterations as shall make it one of the most commodious and beautiful parish churches in the kingdom.

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“ I calculate the expense of the works to be done by me at about £3000; the whole of which I propose to raise without the assistance of a rate. The plans have been examined and approved by the Bishop, who is anxious that this very necessary work should forthwith be commenced. I beg further to state that I am prepared to begin without delay. It is hoped this proposal will be received by you and the parishioners in the spirit in which it is made, and that we shall be found happily united in promoting an object which will greatly add to the comfort and happiness of my parishioners, increase the efficiency of our church, and advance the glory of God.

“ I am, gentlemen,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ JAMES COTTE.

“ To the Churchwardens of St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton.

“ March, 1842.”

In reply to this communication, the churchwardens returned the following answer:—

“ REVEREND SIR,

“ We beg, in reply to your letter respecting the present state of St. Mary's Church, to state, for your information as well as for that of the parishioners in general, that the unsafe and dilapidated state of this venerable fabric has for some time past received our most serious attention; and in order to ascertain more correctly the extent of repairs necessary, we have applied to Mr. Carver, who has furnished us with an estimate of the probable expense, together with a full report thereon. The sum of money actually required, we are of opinion, is more than the parishioners would sanction by a rate at once. We therefore beg to suggest the propriety of borrowing a portion of the sum stated, under the authority of an act of Parliament provided for this purpose. We hope to take an early opportunity of laying before the parish, at a Vestry Meeting, full details; and trust that nothing will prevent our uniting with you in endeavouring to repair and restore our beautiful parish church.

“ We are, reverend sir,

“ Your obedient servants,

“ W. COURT,
A. C. COX,
J. C. EASTON, } Churchwardens.

“ The Rev. Dr. Cottle, Vicar of St. Mary's.”

The churchwardens immediately convened a meeting of the parishioners, for the purpose of submitting this proposal to them, and, if approved, making the necessary rate. The following hand-bill was extensively circulated through the parish:—

“ TO THE RATE-PAYERS OF THE PARISH OF TAUNTON ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

“ We, the Churchwardens of the parish, beg to inform you that our attention was some time ago called by the Venerable the Archdeacon of Taunton to the very dilapidated and dangerous state of the parish church; which subject has since engaged our most serious consideration.

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“ A communication has lately been addressed to us by the Reverend the Vicar, in which he offers to new seat the church throughout with wainscoting, to extend the western gallery, to warm the church, to put in a rich stained window at the eastern end, and a stone communion screen, and make other improvements, at an expense of about £3000, thereby gaining about 450 free seats, and rendering the interior of the church one of the most commodious and beautiful in England; all which the Vicar engages to effect without any expense to the parish, provided the parish will at the same time perform the immediate necessary repairs to the roof, walls, and windows. We therefore intend, at the Vestry Meeting to-morrow, to propose a rate of 10*d.* in the pound, towards the performance of the necessary substantial repairs of the church; no rate having been made for three years past.

“ W. COURT,
A. C. COX,
J. C. EASTON, } Churchwardens.

“ Dated 16th March, 1842.”

At this meeting the plans submitted to the parish by myself and the churchwardens were approved, and a rate of 10*d.* in the pound granted, to assist in carrying out the latter. I here subjoin a report of the meeting, as it appeared in the “ Somerset County Gazette” of the following week:—

“ CHURCH RATES.

“ In pursuance of a notice issued by the churchwardens of Taunton St. Mary Magdalene on Thursday morning last, a meeting of the rate-payers of the parish was held at eleven o'clock the same day, at the Vestry Room, to take into consideration a proposition to be made by the churchwardens, for ‘ a rate of 10*d.* in the pound, towards the performance of the necessary substantial repairs of the church.’

“ A large number of the inhabitants were present, and the Rev. Dr. Cottle, vicar of the parish, presided on the occasion; an adjournment to the Market House was agreed to by the meeting, which repaired thither accordingly. The Chairman then called attention to an estimate which had been prepared by Mr. Carver, of the probable cost of putting the church in a proper state of repair; the various items were as follows:—Stone work, windows, &c., £506 7*s.*; roofing, £725 19*s.*; stone floors, £30; plastering, &c., £51 12*s.* 6*d.*; repairing walls without, £301 6*s.* 9*d.*; total, £1615 5*s.* 3*d.* In order to suit the convenience of the parishioners generally, this sum was proposed to be raised in two instalments, the first amounting to £929 18*s.*, and the remainder at a subsequent period.

“ The rate was proposed by Mr. A. C. Cox, and seconded by Mr. H. Badcock, who observed that the churchwardens, thinking it would be too much to expect the parishioners at once to grant a sum sufficient to cover the whole expense of repairing the church, had thought it best to apply for only a little more than half that sum, in order that something might immediately be done, with a view to remedy evils so much complained of in consequence of the dilapidated state of the building. At the same time, they did not desire to withhold the real facts of

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the case ; they wished it to be perfectly understood that, although £900 was all that was now asked, the total sum required would be, as stated in Mr. Carver's letter, £1615. Mr. Badcock then alluded to the alterations and improvements intended to be made in the church by the Vicar, which he considered would be a great advantage to the parish, and concluded by seconding the motion.

" Mr. Bunter, who was exceedingly humorous on the occasion, expressed his intention to oppose the rate, on the ground that, as a Dissenter, its adoption would impose an unjust tax upon him and others who dissented from the Established Church. Church rates had been twice condemned by Parliament, and he thought they ought to be abolished—it was not the proper way to support a religious establishment. If the rate was passed, however, he would pay his share of it : he did not intend to go to gaol, or render himself a martyr by refusing to make payment when called upon.

" Mr. E. Beadon combated Mr. Bunter's arguments as to the principle of church rates, which, in his opinion, were just, because they were the law of the land. In answer to Mr. Beadon's observations, Mr. Bunter read a short extract from the *Times* newspaper, which had come into his hands that morning, and in which church rates were denounced as an unjust and nefarious impost on the Dissenters, for the support of an establishment to which they did not belong.

" Mr. W. Pinchard also made a few remarks in favour of church rates, and was followed by Mr. H. J. Leigh, who spoke on the subject with much ability and effect. After alluding to the position in which his firm attachment to the church had placed him, and which now induced him, though with great pain, to oppose many of those friends with whom on questions of a generally political nature he was always proud most cordially to act, he observed that he thought the question of church rates was a mistaken one with reference to religious liberty. If a person purchased a house, he did so with a knowledge that he would have to pay so much for taxes while in possession of that property ; and therefore, while it remained the law of the land, he was bound to pay that tax as well as any other. He should rejoice, however, to see the law altered ; he had petitioned, and would petition again, that the repairs of the church should be defrayed out of the corporate property of the establishment, and he felt assured that the Church of England would then be placed in a much safer and stronger position. He would assist with all his heart in any endeavour to get the law altered, but he strongly deprecated resistance to the payment of church rates whilst they were the law. Mr. Leigh then referred to the internal alterations and great improvements which Dr. Cottle proposed to make in the church, and which that gentleman had engaged to effect without any expense to the parish, if the parish would immediately perform the necessary repairs to the roof, walls, and windows, which he considered a noble offer on the part of the Vicar, and a strong inducement to every man cheerfully to pay his portion of the rate. If they asked what security there was for the performance of Dr. Cottle's proposal, he replied it was the word of their meritorious and energetic Vicar, whom, Mr. Leigh said, he would readily and at all times back for the performance of whatever he might engage to do ; at the same time it had nothing to do with the business of the day, except as matter of inducement.

" The Chairman then put the resolution to the meeting, and a show of hands having been taken for and against it, the majority were in favour of the rate, which was declared to be duly carried.

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"A vote of thanks was then accorded to the Vicar for his impartial conduct in the chair, and, in acknowledging the compliment, he addressed the meeting at some length. He said that, wishing to act impartially on the occasion, he had refrained from making any remark before on the object of their meeting; he would now, however, say a few words. He should be glad to see the law of church rate settled. The dilapidated state in which the church of St. Mary Magdalene had for a long period been, had been to him a source of much anxiety—yet he had dreaded to ask the parish for the large sum which would be required to restore it, or to incur the heavy responsibility of having it repaired without their co-operation. He trusted that, this rate having been carried, they would, by the end of the next twelvemonth, see their parish church in a very different state to what it then was. He then entered into an explanation of the plans which he had formed for the improvement of the interior of the sacred edifice, and observed that he was prepared to commence the work immediately.

"The reverend gentleman was most cordially received and supported, and whatever might have been the feelings of those present as to the principle of church rates, we feel bound to say, that the manner and spirit in which the proceedings of the meeting were conducted—orderly, and without the least display of hostility on either side—reflected the highest credit on all present, and afforded an example worthy of imitation throughout the country. Our opinions on the question of church rates are well known; as the source of discontent and strife, we should hail their abolition with feelings of much satisfaction, and we feel that, as was observed by Mr. H. J. Leigh, the Church would then really be placed in a safer and stronger position. As long as they remain the law of the land, however, we feel that it is the duty of every man to submit to that law, at the same time that he may use his utmost power and influence to effect its obliteration from the statute book.

"We understand that Dr. Cottle intends to new-pew the church throughout with oak wainscoting, to extend the western gallery, to introduce stoves, to put in a rich stained window at the eastern end, and a stone Communion screen, and make other improvements, at an expense of about £3000, thereby gaining about 450 free seats; and we cannot withhold the expression of our gratification that this sacred edifice, which forms so distinguished an ornament of our town and the beautiful vale in which it is situated, will, by these alterations and improvements, be again entitled to the character which it formerly bore, of being one of the most magnificent and commodious churches in England."

The rate being granted, the work was immediately commenced. The portion of the restoration undertaken by the Vicar was entrusted to Mr. B. Ferrey, diocesan architect. The repairs to be performed by the parish were placed under the superintendence of Mr. R. Carver, the county surveyor.

It was too much to expect that a work of such magnitude, and one involving such great changes in the ecclesiastical character of the parish church, would proceed without some difficulties. There were many who would regret the removal of those objects which reminded them of by-gone days, and in whose minds a thousand tender associations would spring

up at the recollection of the past: we know how to honour and respect such feelings; but there were other and greater difficulties. We had to break through long-cherished systems, and to overcome deeply-rooted prejudices. All who have had any experience in parochial matters know that nothing is more difficult to manage than the arrangement of parish pews. There is no subject connected with the church on which persons are so sensitive, and on which they exhibit such unchristian tempers. Ours was no common or partial attack on these dearly beloved objects of veneration; the old high pew was to be brought low, the square pen was to be removed, and the snug sleeping-boxes were to give place to low, uniform, open seats. No marvel, then, that war was directed against the sacrilegious hand which should dare to introduce such innovations. No sooner was the cry raised, "the pews are in danger," than the Bishop was immediately to be applied to; the faculty should be withheld; the church was to be forsaken; no more Easter offerings for the Vicar. A meeting of the parishioners was forthwith to be convened, to restrain him from such innovations, and to prevent, if possible, such latitudinarian schemes, which, if allowed to spread, would be sure to destroy both Church and State. The meeting was held, large numbers attended, a formidable attack was to be made on the Vicar and his favourite system of low and open seats; but as he thought it no part of his duty to attend, and as there was no other object of attack, what could be done?

After expressing to each other their disappointment in not having him present, for the purpose of stating their views and determinations on the subject of the dear old pews (and which, perhaps, would not have been done in the most kind manner), and their regret at his want of courtesy towards the parishioners in absenting himself from the meeting, the following resolution was adopted:—

"Resolved, that in the opinion of this meeting it is inexpedient to petition the Lord Bishop of this diocese to grant a faculty for re-pewing and repairing St. Mary's Church."

The business of the day having thus terminated, all retired well pleased with this, no doubt, well-meant effort to prevent a supposed infringement upon the rights and privileges of the parishioners. It could not be supposed that this resolution would interfere with the progress of our works. All went on, therefore, precisely as before; and with this meeting ended all public opposition to the introduction of new seats. I have never had any cause to regret my absence from this meeting, or my conduct on the occasion. I have seen what bad feelings are sometimes engendered and

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perpetuated by these assemblies. I knew, too, who had said that "where no wood is, there the fire goeth out;" and that the good cause I had espoused, whatever temporary obstruction it might meet with, must ultimately prevail. I had, also, too great confidence in the good sense of my parishioners to suppose that they would continue their opposition to that which their better judgment would by-and-by convince them was right. In this hope I have not been disappointed; and my object in alluding to this meeting is, not to censure or blame those who convened it, but for the purpose of introducing the pleasing fact, that so completely have their feelings and views changed that there are now but few who do not approve of the plan we adopted.

All proceeded steadily till January 1843, when a new and unexpected difficulty arose. It was understood at a former meeting of the rate-payers that the Vicar, on his own responsibility, would fit up the interior of the church, and make certain improvements, provided the parish would undertake the necessary repairs and restoration of the other portions of the fabric. No promise was or could have been given by the churchwardens as to the exact sum required for this purpose. It is true an estimate had been made by the surveyor, of the probable amount; but on taking down the roof, and examining the building more closely, it was found to be in a much worse and more dangerous condition than was at first supposed. The estimate of Mr. Carver, to whom these circumstances were unknown, was therefore found very inadequate to meet the necessary expenditure. Another rate was accordingly applied for by the churchwardens; and as they could not pledge themselves to the exact amount of their future outlay, either from some misunderstanding or mismanagement the motion for the rate was negatived. A poll was, however, demanded on the part of the churchwardens, and at its close the numbers were found to be as follows:—

For the Rate	.	.	.	.	.	.	460
Against it	.	.	.	.	.	.	313
Majority for the Rate	.	.	.	.	.	.	147

The rate, amounting to about £900, having been granted, workmen for some months were busily employed; some in pulling down the old pews, and restoring and cleaning the pillars, others in excavating the floors and repairing the walls, others again in preparing the new roofs and windows; and as these works advanced, an increased interest was also beginning to be felt by the parishioners generally. The church began to develope new

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beauties, as the enormities which had hitherto concealed them were removed, and it was felt, with very few exceptions, that, after all, the church was not only improved in appearance, but really not in danger, by the removal of the old pews, and that we had commenced not only a necessary, but a good work.

The period again arrived when the exhausted purses of the churchwardens reminded them that the further aid of their fellow-parishioners was needed. Another meeting was therefore called on the 2nd of May, 1844, for the purpose of making a third rate of tenpence in the pound, for the repairs and other necessary expenses of the church. Against this proposition there were only two or three dissentients, and the rate was consequently carried. I refer with much pleasure to this meeting, because it was one so unusual in the history of such assemblies. The kind and conciliatory spirit manifested on this occasion by all classes and denominations of my parishioners was such as not only to entitle them to my warmest gratitude, but to perpetuate the event in my recollection.

The following report of the meeting appeared in the "County Gazette" of the following week:—

"A numerous and respectable meeting of the inhabitants of the parish of Taunton St. Mary Magdalene was held on the 2nd inst., to take into consideration the propriety of making a church-rate of ten-pence in the pound, to meet the ordinary and extraordinary expenses of the current year, according to the estimates produced. The Rev. Dr. Cottle presided.—Henry James Leigh, Esq., said, having been requested to move a resolution that such rate be granted, he had much pleasure in taking upon himself that duty, especially as, from the appearance of the meeting, he did not anticipate any serious objection to the proposed rate; for the meeting would recollect that the rate was required, not for any new scheme, but for the purpose of finishing the necessary substantial repairs of the fabric, in the course of its restoration, and which could not possibly be left in its present unfinished state. The active and intelligent churchwardens had produced an estimate for completing such repairs, and for ordinary expenses, such as clerk, sexton, &c., amounting to £908 18s. The gross amount of one ten penny rate would be about £1010; it might be calculated to realise £920, after deducting void houses and bad debts. Mr. Leigh then went into a detail of figures at some length, from the commencement of the work, and said that the expenditure by the churchwardens had been so careful and judicious that the most critical opponent of church-rates would find that their entire outlay had been confined to the most strictly usual and legal charges. Mr. Leigh was happy in thinking that the opposition of their fellow-townsmen, the dissenters, upon former occasions, had not been factious, but kindly, and, however he might differ from them on this point, conscientious, so far as it had proceeded—(hear, hear). They must, he hoped, well know that he was a friend as much to their religious liberty as to his own.—Henry Badcock, Esq., seconded the resolution.—A show of hands being then called for by the chairman, the rate was carried almost unanimously, only three or four being held up against it, and the

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chairman declared the resolution carried. The thanks of the meeting were then given to the worthy and reverend chairman."

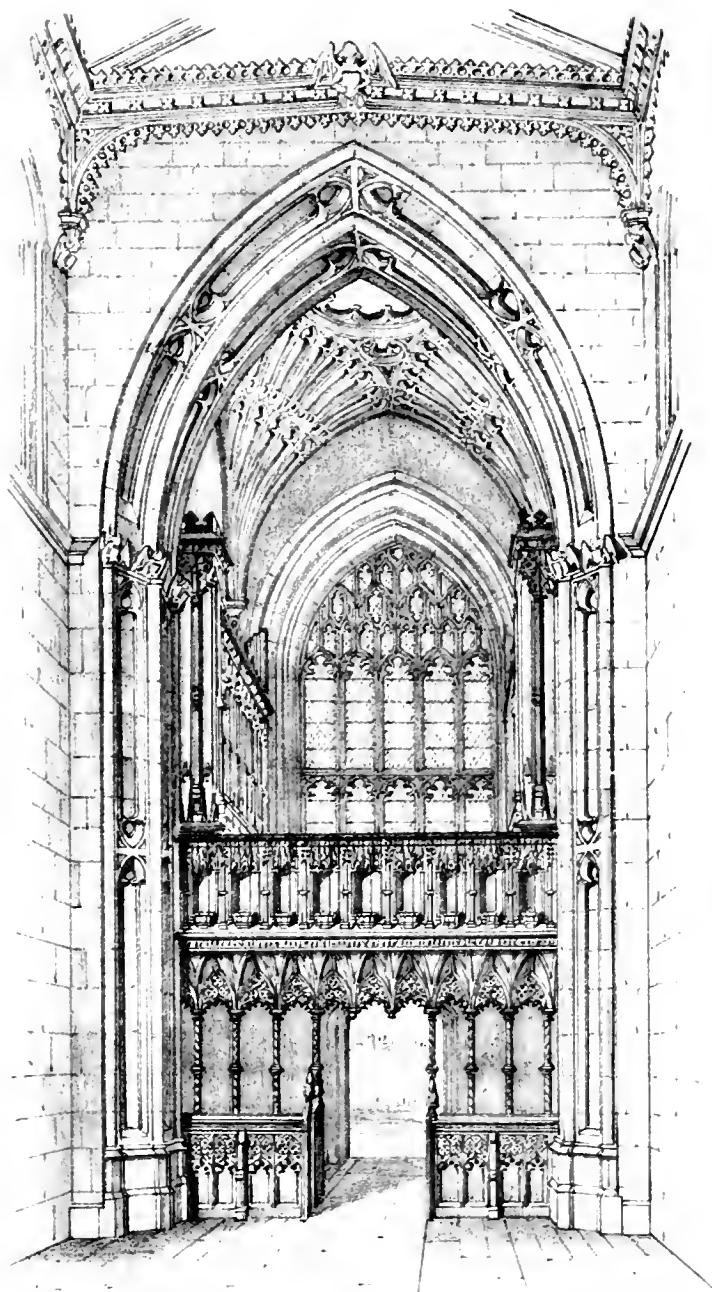
Having thus stated the rise and progress of this restoration, and some of the difficulties with which we have had to contend, and which have been happily surmounted, let us hope that before the close of the present year our labours will be brought to a happy termination, and be the means—

" Of blessing thousands, thousands yet unborn,
Through late posterity."

Before a more detailed description of the interior of St. Mary's is given, I cannot resist the temptation to introduce Wordsworth's view of the interior of a Gothic Church, so descriptive of our own, in the following beautiful lines:—

" As chanced, the portals of the sacred pile
Stood open ; and we entered. On my frame,
At such transition from the fervid air,
A grateful coolness fell, that seemed to strike
The heart, in concert with that temperate awe
And natural reverence which the place inspired,
Not raised in nice proportions was the pile,
But large and massy ; for duration built ;
With pillars crowded, and the roof upheld
By naked rafters intricately crossed,
Like leafless underboughs, 'mid some thick grove,
All withered by the depth of shade above.
Admonitory texts inscribed the walls,
Each in its ornamental scroll enclosed,
Each also crowned with winged heads—a pair
Of rudely-painted cherubims. The floor
Of nave and aisle, in unpretending guise,
Was occupied by oaken benches, ranged
In seemly rows ;
And on the floor beneath
Sepulchral stones appeared, with emblems graven,
And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with small
And shining effigies of brass inlaid."

On entering the church by the western door, the visiter feels, on beholding the striking effect produced by the clustered columns, the numerous arches, the elaborately-carved roof, the splendid nave and aisles, the richly-stained windows, and the charm thrown over the whole by its sacredness and antiquity, that "the palace is not for man, but for the



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Lord God." The church consists of a chancel, nave, four aisles, and two small chantries. There are but few other churches in England that have *four* aisles and a nave. The following are their several measurements:—

	ft. in.
From the screen to the altar	146 7
Total width from north wall to south	85 9
	ft. in. ft. in.
The nave	95 5 long, by 20 11 broad.
The north aisle	76 4 , 20 2 ,
The second north aisle	76 4 , 12 5 ,
The south aisle	82 6 , 20 0 ,
The second south aisle	81 3 , 12 3 ,
The north chantry	25 5 , 18 2 ,
The south chantry	25 0 , 15 2 ,
The chancel	51 2 , 21 3 ,

We will now give a brief account of the arrangement and fittings-up of the church: and we would first notice the **Organ**. It is always a difficulty with church builders and restorers where to place this instrument. It had hitherto occupied an unsightly gallery, projecting considerably into the nave of the church, and thus destroying its proportions, blocking up the tower arch, and concealing the western window. This gallery having been removed, it became evident to all that, to replace it, even by one of a more correct style and character, would be to mar the effect of the whole restoration. Where to place the organ was a subject that occupied our anxious consideration. It was at length determined, though the design was novel, and its practicability doubted by many, that it should be divided into two parts and erected within the tower arch, against the north and south side of the tower, thus adding twenty feet to the length of the building, which would much improve its proportions and preserve undisturbed the western window, the beautiful panelled arch of the tower, and the nave of the church.

The old organ was built by public subscription in the year 1709; little of it now remains, except the open diapason in the swell of the present instrument, which is in excellent preservation, and exceedingly fine, and, having never undergone any "improvement," is a good specimen of old pipes. The great organ and swell are on the south side of the window, and the choir organ, with the pedal pipes, on the north side; the bellows and feeders being inside the window, level with the sill, and extending the whole width of the tower. By this arrangement, the effect of the instrument has been increased; its tones are powerful and exquisitely sweet.

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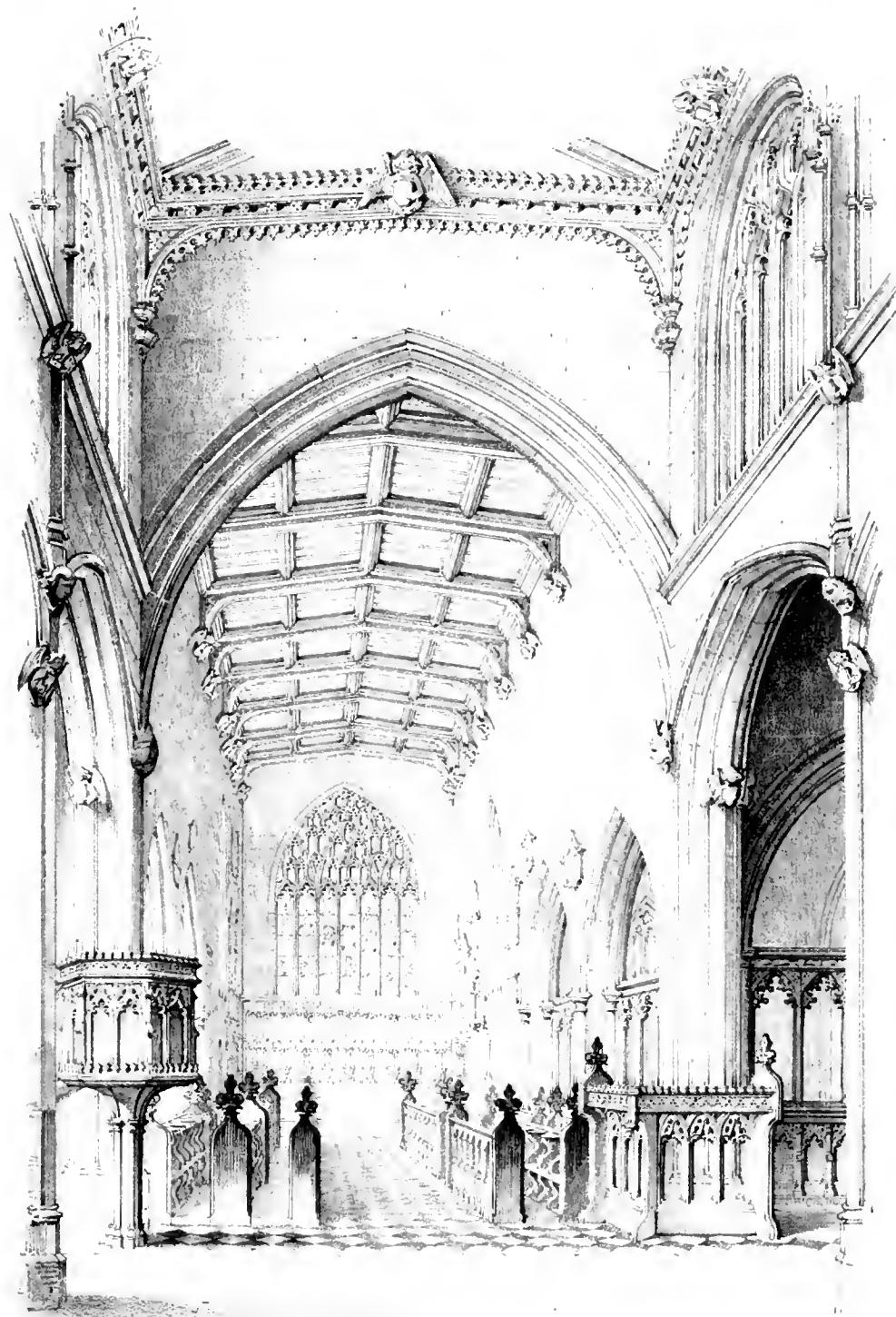
The diapasons are good, and the clarabella is quite deserving the name. It contains the following stops:—

GREAT ORGAN.		SWELL.	
Trumpet	1828	Clarion	1709
Mixture, two ranks	"	Oboe	1828
Cornet, three ditto	1709	Trumpet	1709
Sesquialtera, three ditto	"	Principal	1828
Fifteenth	"	Stopped diapason	1709
Twelfth	"	Open ditto	"
Principal	"	CHOIR ORGAN.	
Clarabella	1844	Fifteenth	1844
Stopped diapason	1709	Cremona	"
Front open	1828	Flute	"
Small open	1844	Principal	1828
Double diapason to CCC	1828	Stopped diapason	1709
Octave copula to Great and Swell		Dulciana	1828
Copula to Choir and Swell			
Great organ pedals			
Choir organ ditto			
Pedal pipes to manuals			

The compass of the great and choir organs is from FFF to F in alt, sixty-one notes; and the swell is to tenor F. Considerable alterations have been made in the movements connected with the pedals, by which means an extra octave on the great and choir organ is brought into action, as well as making a double diapason of the original unison. Some notion of the difficulties with which Mr. Ling ^(a) has had to contend, and which he has completely overcome, may be given to those who are acquainted with the construction of instruments of this description, when we state that the movements from the keys of the choir organ to the pallets extend to a distance of twenty-one feet, and if placed end to end would extend over a distance of more than 2000 feet. The "trackers" are carried under the feet of the organist, and, notwithstanding the apparent complexity of the movement, the touch is exceedingly good. Mr. Ling has received the highest praise from all parties for this triumph of his skill over the numerous and great difficulties by which he was surrounded.

The Screen at the entrance of the nave, and which also forms the front of the organ loft, is considered a very beautiful piece of workmanship. It was executed by Messrs. Wood, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London, and having been publicly exhibited at the time of its completion, the following notice was taken of it in one of the journals of the day:—

^(a) The whole of the arrangement was designed and effected by Mr. Ling, organ-builder, Taunton.



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"An opportunity was afforded us this week of inspecting a beautiful screen, designed for St. Mary's Church, Taunton. It is impossible to give any correct idea of its form by the pen alone. Its design is chaste, but bold and striking, and its execution, even to the minutest details, positively superb. Every portion is carved with the most careful finish, and in its general effect it carries the mind two centuries back, when the art attained its highest perfection."

The **Nave**, **Aisles**, and **Transepts** are handsomely fitted up with wainscot, having low open seats, with massive stall ends, terminating in richly-carved poppy-heads.

The **Chancel** is furnished with stalls, separated from the aisles by light and elegant screens.

The **Pulpit** is hexagonal in form, and is carried upon a stem, having small columns attached, from which spring ribs and groining of oak, supporting the floor and body of the pulpit; the sides are decorated with traceried panels, and each angle is flanked by a light crocketed pinnacle, resting upon an angel; the stairease is of light construction, and has richly-carved tracery between each baluster.

The **Font** is of Hamdon Hill stone, and is raised upon two steps; the lower one being octangular, and the upper one cruciform. The font itself is highly enriched; the exterior of the basin has, on each face of the octagon, elaborate geometrical tracery.

The **Altar Screen** is of Hamdon Hill stone, and consists of a series of tabernacle work: the upper tier of canopies is richly carved; every alternate niche is of larger size than the intermediate ones, and the latter are arranged in two series, occupying together the same height as the larger niches; upon the stringcourse and other portions, are emblazoned various texts of Scripture, suitable to the precincts of the Holy Table. The late Mrs. Jenkyns, of Wells, left fifty guineas for the "fitting up the altarpiece in St. Mary's Church, and furnishing the same with appropriate passages from Holy Scripture, calculated to impress the mind with an awful sense of our love and duty towards God."

The **Eastern Window** is filled with stained glass, by Mr. Wailes, of Newcastle, and may justly be considered one of his best works; the compartments between the mullions are filled with niches, containing figures of our blessed Lord, the Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, and the four Evangelists; under each is a cherub holding a scroll, on which appears an appropriate inscription. The tracery of the window is exceedingly rich and chaste; it is filled with angels and cherubim bearing shields or scrolls, on which are placed either texts of Holy Scripture or some sacred emblem. There is also over the chancel door a small obituary

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window, by Mr. Wailes, in memory of the infant daughter of the present vicar. It is much to be desired that this mode of perpetuating the memory of our friends should be more generally adopted. Nothing can be more unsightly or unmeaning than the "monumental patchwork" so frequently seen on the walls of our churches. We may indulge the hope, from the reviving state of ecclesiastical taste and architectural knowledge, that such "sepulchral fungi" will henceforth cease to disfigure the fair proportions of many of our principal churches. Whether this evil shall be continued, will depend much upon the clergy themselves.^(a) There is nothing in the rest of the windows that requires any particular notice; with the exception of the tracery of a few, they are at present filled with common glass. It is hoped, however, that at no distant period this will be removed, and its place supplied by stained glass of an appropriate description and character. A plan is in contemplation for introducing two or three windows yearly till the whole are filled. Perhaps there is nothing which our new churches want so much, and nothing which our old ones have lost with so much injury to their general effect, as windows of stained glass. In the desecration of our churches during the reign of William Dowsing and Company,^(b) there were few things by which they so successfully disfigured them as their smashing the beautiful windows. The whole of those in St. Mary's church were once of stained glass, as seen by the fragments recently discovered. By whom they were demolished is uncertain; there can, however, be but little doubt that some of the members of the above fraternity were either engaged in or sanctioned this fanatical and wicked act. It would be most gratifying to see those

^(a) I beg to recommend the perusal of a very interesting and valuable paper on monuments, by the Rev. John Armstrong, B.A., read before the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society.

All who profess and call themselves churchmen should read Mr. Markland's invaluable "Remarks on English Churches, and on the expediency of rendering Sepulchral Memorials subservient to Pious and Christian Uses." I am indebted to him for several remarks in this chapter.

^(b) The notorious William Dowsing was employed as Parliamentary visitor in demolishing church ornaments, &c., in the county of Suffolk, in the years 1643-4. In his Journal he says, "At Sudbury we brake down ten mighty great angels in glass; in all eighty. At Allhallows, we brake about twenty superstitious pictures, and took up thirty brazen superstitions inscriptions. At Clare, we brake down one thousand pictures superstitions—I brake down two hundred; three of God the Father, and three of Christ and the Holy Lamb, and three of the Holy Ghost like a dove with wings; and the twelve apostles were carved in wood on the top of the roof, which we gave orders to take down; and twenty cherubims to be taken down; and the sun and the moon in the east window by the King's arms, to be taken down." His savage eagerness for destruction unhappily was not confined to Suffolk. In Cambridge he made sad havoc, and would have laid his merciless hands on the fine painted windows of King's College Chapel, but in this he was fortunately interrupted.

"It is said of Richard Culmer, that, in defacing the windows of Christ Church, in Canterbury, in which among other things was represented the History of our Saviour's Temptation, he brake down Christ, and left the Devil standing; for which he afterwards gave this reason—that he had an order to take down Christ, but had no order to take down the Devil."—WALKER, p. 25.

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windows restored, and the thoughts so beautifully expressed by Faber realised :—

“ I saw the sunbeams steal
Through painted glass at evensong, and weave
Their three-fold tints upon the marble near
Faith, prayer, and love.”

Not only were the walls, windows, and roofs of the church in a dangerous condition, but the floor was in an inseenre and unhealthy state. There was no proper drainage. The water from the church and yard, instead of being carried off by proper gutters, was allowed to soak into the church, thus producing damp and rot. In addition to this, from the improper practice of burying in the church, the exhalations from the vaults, in many cases covered with sleepers only, were sometimes intolerable. Large heaps of bones were found uncovered underneath the floor, and, in one instance, under a well-lined and cushioned pew, was found a coffin with its contents, with no indication of its ever having been interred. These evils have now been remedied, a proper drain has been made round the whole church, and the vaults properly secured by brick arches. The churchyard has also been lowered. This part of our work, while it has added much to the preservation of the edifice and the comfort of the congregation, has also considerably increased our expenditure.

The bases of the pillars were also found to be very perilous. One of them had sunk several inches during the last year. On examination it was found that the ground underneath had been removed for the purpose of making a vault. They have now been properly secured. The whole of the church has been excavated between two and three feet, for the purpose of keeping it dry, and also to introduce Mr. Sylvester's Patent Hot-Water Apparatus. I am aware that many do not approve of warming churches, but I have never been able to see the force of the arguments usually advanced. Our habits and manner of living are so very different from those of our forefathers, that it seems now almost necessary in our large churches for the preservation of health. I admit that much might be done to remedy the evil (if evil it be) by proper ventilation during the week; but still, if it enables the aged, the delicate, or the infirm, to worship God without distraction, where is the objection? I am not advocating the usual methods adopted in warming churches by the general hot-water systems, or by unsightly stoves, and still more unsightly flues, penetrating through the roof or the tracery of some beautiful window. Neither money nor trouble have been spared to discover the best mode, and we are at present quite satisfied with the one introduced. The

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apparatus is concealed from view, is simple in construction, and effective and inexpensive in operation.

The fire is placed under the vestry, at the north side of the chancel. This room is entirely new, and rendered fire-proof; it is panelled with wainscot, and generally admired for its convenience and chasteness of design. From the rotten state of the roof of the old vestry the clergyman was frequently in danger of a shower bath, *nolens volens*.

The numerous visitors who daily frequent St. Mary's church show not only that this restoration has attracted considerable attention, but that a great interest is felt in the subject of church restoration. Persons have travelled one and even two hundred miles to see the character and progress of our work. Who would, a few years since, have dreamt of individuals taking such a journey for such a purpose?

It is gratifying to find that what we have done has met with general approbation. We are not so Utopian as to suppose that we have satisfied or can satisfy the views and tastes of all. This were a task no mortal ever achieved.

We have had obstacles, arising from limited resources, from parochial objectors, and from the building itself, which are known only to ourselves, and which we have not been able entirely to surmount. We have, nevertheless, done our best under the circumstances, not only to preserve it from destruction, but to restore it to its former beauty. We have not sought to revive papal superstitions and embellishments, "thus casting stumbling-blocks in the path which truly leads to the sanctuary," but to maintain its decency and its character as a Protestant place of worship, so far as we have been supported and encouraged by the precepts and examples of Holy Writ, and the doctrines and usages of our apostolic Church.^(a)

In our zeal for the restoration of our churches, and our love for antiquity, there is a danger of running into extremes, and of introducing ornaments and adopting practices not according to "Protestant use," thus

^(a) From the days of the Reformation there have prevailed three schools in regard to rites, ceremonies, vestments, and church decorations:—the Puritan, the Laudean (as afterwards named), and the Anglican; of which last Hooker was the most able and judicious exponent. I humbly profess to be a disciple of Hooker. The Laudean school was popishly ceremonial in its notions; and wished to retain, with or without reason, whatever had grown up in the course of the darkest ages. The Puritans, on the contrary, would allow nothing for which a text of Scripture could not be produced; but their notions fairly carried out recoiled upon themselves, for if a white surplice is not enjoined in the New Testament, neither is a black Geneva gown. Hooker maintained, with great sobriety, that the Church might, in matters indifferent, prescribe what is for order and general edification; and that decent rites and ceremonies are not of necessity contrary to the Word of God because they are not mentioned in it. The compilers of our Prayer Book ably and judiciously set forth this idea in the Preface to the Prayer Book, with the additions on the services of the church and on ceremonies. These documents should be carefully studied at this eventful period of our history.

countenancing the abominations of Popery, and saddening the hearts of the Lord's people. If men did but remember the maxim, "*Medio tutissimus ibis*," from how many evils and extravagances would they be preserved! While I have no sympathy with those who would fit up our churches with all the gorgeousness and superstition of the Church of Rome, neither have I any fellowship^(a) with those who censure or condemn every building that is not "run up," as the phrase is, in the meeting-house style; or who, while they dwell in their own "ceiled houses," grudge every farthing that is spent in beautifying the house of God. I know that the Almighty dwells not in temples made with hands, and that it is not the splendour of architecture which will attract His presence, or fix His residence. I know that He will come down as benignantly, and abide as graciously, when His servants have assembled in the rude village church, as when they meet in vaulted aisles and under canopied ceilings. This, however, does not meet the question; for the mean building may have the Shekinah with it, as well as the magnificent; but is this any reason why we should rear only the mean, if we have it in our power to build the magnificent? The Almighty was content to have a tabernacle, destitute of wealth, while his people were in the wilderness, and harassed by their enemies; but when He had given them abundance and peace, He required a temple, of which it was said, "The house that is to be builded to the Lord must be exceedingly magnificent." And when that house arose, it was the wonder of the earth; the gold, and the silver, and the precious stones were lavished on its walls, and the temple penetrated into the skies, a glorious and effulgent mass, as though it had descended from above, or, rather, as if it had been reared by immortal hands. We do think that when, with every token of approval, Jehovah took possession of a structure on which architecture had exhausted all its powers, and wealth had poured all its treasures, He gave evidence that churches, inasmuch as they are temples reared to His honour, ought to exhibit the opulence of the builders, and to be monuments of the readiness of piety to devote to the Lord the riches derived from His bounty. It is no token for good in our country, that while other structures are advancing in magnificence, churches are built of a less expensive style and character. If we compare ourselves with our ancestors, it may be said that we build more costly mansions and luxurious houses. If we want

(a) "We are told that when the excellent George Herbert undertook the rebuilding of the church of Layton, he made it so much 'his whole business that he became restless till he saw it finished, and that for decency and beauty it exceeded all others.' It is decency and beauty such as Herbert would have approved—such as our own pure and apostolic church sanctions, and nothing more—which should be universally adopted in our ecclesiastical buildings."—Markland's Remarks on English Churches.

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a new Exchange, it shall throw the old into the shade; if we build new houses of Parliament, they shall far eclipse in grandeur and magnificence the former; if Hospitals are to be erected, they shall be palaces, compared with those of former times: but if we want to build a Church, it must be as inexpensive, plain, and unadorned as possible, contrasting strangely with the magnificent buildings which former ages delighted to consecrate to the glory of God. There is wealth enough in the land; would that there were the disposition to use it not only to multiply the number of our churches, but to increase their magnificence! Is it not a reflection upon the age and upon the country that, while we go far beyond our forefathers in the splendour of all other buildings, we have adopted a niggardly style in regard to our churches, as though it were unimportant, either to God or ourselves, what kind of structure is set apart for the offices of religion?

It is not, however, unimportant, either as it respects God or ourselves. If the church be God's house, it ought, like the palace of a king, to bear as great proportion as we have power to effect to the majesty of the occupant. With regard to ourselves,—who has not been conscious of the power of a cathedral to excite lofty emotions and heavenly thoughts?^(a) It is vain to endeavour to make ourselves independent of association. We must be content to be material as well as spiritual, and not disdain the aids which a place of worship may give to the piety of the worshippers. It cannot tell well for the religious feeling of a country if there be parsimony in the churches, while there is profusion everywhere else. The churches—not the exchanges, or hospitals, or docks, or palaces—the churches, we repeat, ought to be the chief evidences, as well by their splendour as their number, of the piety, power, and wealth of a kingdom.^(b)

(a) "On entering a cathedral! I am filled with devotion and with awe; I am lost to the actualities that surround me, and my whole being expands into the Infinite; and the only sensible impression left is, that *I am nothing*!"—Literary Remains of S. T. Coleridge.

(b) "I cannot concur with those who, professing what they consider to be a scriptural jealousy for the simplicity of Christian worship, speak of the beauty, grandeur, and costly magnificence of a sacred edifice as inconsistent with that simplicity. I admit, indeed, that simplicity should ever be a governing principle pervading all our sacred buildings; but the objector may be reminded that there is a sublime and elevated, as well as a plain and unadorned, simplicity: the latter may befit our own habitations, but surely falls below what is due to the house of God, when we have the means of arraying it with something more dignified and costly. On the important principle of simplicity, I would remark, that while it necessarily rejects that which is showy, gaudy, crowded, and distracted, it fully recognises all that is graceful, beautiful, magnificent, and even, where practicable, highly enriched; the principle of simplicity being still preserved when those enrichments are subordinate to, and in no respect interrupt, the leading characteristic beauties of the edifice; and which will always be the case when designed by superior taste and discriminating judgment in the architect. Let us bear in mind that when the same God and Saviour for whose worship all our churches are erected Himself entered the Temple of old, and looked round about upon all things, including, of course, the 'goodly stones and gifts' with which it was adorned, He took no exception to any of its splendid emoluments; His displeasure was exclusively manifested

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Who does not feel the strength and eloquence of the following remarks from one of our Homilies?—

“ If a man’s private house, wherein he dwelleth be deeyed, he will never cease till it be restored up again. Yea, if his barn wherein he keepeth his corn, be out of reparations, what diligence useth he to make it in a perfect state again! If the stable of his horse, yea, the stye for his swine, be not able to hold out water and wind, how careful is he to do cost thereon! And shall we be so mindful of our common base houses, deputed to so vile employment, and be forgetful of the house of God, wherein be entreated the words of our eternal salvation, wherein be administered the sacraments and mysteries of our redemption? ”

At the Reformation, the churches were probably in a good state of preservation; no country could vie with our own in the number and magnificence of its sacred edifices. The suppression of the monasteries, however, tended in no small degree to hasten the destruction of our churches. The monasteries having been seized by the Crown, some of them were reduced to a state of ruin—others entirely demolished. And if a few of the conventional churches were allowed for parochial uses, who was to repair them when in a state of decay? A secular spirit prevailed, and the idolatry of superstition was superseded by the idolatry of covetousness, through which many churches were despoiled, even of the plate barely necessary for the decent administration of the Holy Eucharist. And if we pass on to the reign of Elizabeth, the opposition of those divines and their followers who had imbibed the doctrines and discipline of the school of Geneva rendered any attempt towards beautifying and adorning churches useless. It was regarded and declaimed against as popish and superstitions; parochial churches were, therefore, allowed to fall into decay, or, if repaired, it was done in a plain and inelegant manner, completely at variance with the richness and style of the preceding age. It was, however, in the subsequent century that they were laid waste by the ruthless hand of violence.^(a) “ The mutilations to which they have been visibly subjected were not the work of the Reformers, but are to be referred to the Rebellion in the next century, a political and ecclesiastical

against the disorder which prevailed, the traffic which was carried on, and the spirit of the world which reigned throughout the assembly. All that was accessory to this, and this only, he expelled from the hallowed place; the costly splendour of the building He left unmolested and unreproved.” —“ Remarks on Monumental Architecture, by John Bacon, Esq., F.S.A.;” read at the Quarterly Meeting of the Exeter Architectural Society.

(a) “ The object of our Reformers was not to banish indiscriminately everything which had belonged to the Church while under the power of Rome in this country. They would not cut away that which might be preserved and healed; they removed only those errors which had arisen from neglect of Scripture and disregard to the traditional interpretation of the primitive Church.” —Rev. J. H. Pindar’s Sermons on the Common Prayer.

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catastrophe which went far indeed beyond the wishes and intentions of the Reformers." It was during the great Rebellion, "when men," says South, "used to express their honour to God and their allegiance to their Prince in the same way, demolishing the palaces of the one and the temples of the other." It was when fanaticism lent its fierce and pitiless spirit to the work of spoliation that its triumph was complete.

" Whate'er the popish hands have built,
Our hammers shall undo;
We 'll break their pipes and burn their copes,
And pull down churches too.
We 'll exercise within the groves,
And teach beneath a tree;
We 'll make a pulpit of a eask,
And, hey then, up go wee!"^(a)

The orders which the House of Commons issued in 1643-44, for the abolition of all Church ceremonies and appendages, led to consequences, which are mentioned by Dr. Heylin in these words:—"Hereupon," he says, "followed such an alteration in all churches and chapels, that the churchwardens pulled down more in a week than all the bishops and clergy had been able to raise in two weeks of years; such irreverences, too, in God's public service, and discontinuance of it in many places, that his Majesty was compelled to give new life to it by proclamation—an event which only shewed the king's good meaning, with his want of power." Melancholy trophies, indeed, did these sacred fabrics now present to the eye of the nation!—trophies, alas! of the victory of sacrilege and church hatred, over apostolic piety, order, and affection.^(b) To this period may be traced the spoliation of our churches, and the commencement of pews and whitewash.

^(a) Chappell's "Collection of English Airs," quoted by Mr. Markland.

^(b) It is no other than tragical to relate the carriage of that furious sacrilege, whereof our eyes and ears were the sad witnesses, under the authority and presence of Linsey, Toftes, the sheriff, and Greenwood. Lord, what work was here! What clattering of glasses! what beating down of walls! what tearing up of monuments! what pulling down of seats! what wresting out of irons and brass from the windows and graves! what defacing of arms! what demolishing of curious stonework, that had not any representation in the world, but only of the cost of the founder and skill of the mason! what tooting and piping on the destroyed organ pipes! and what hideous triumph on the market-day, before all the country, when, in a kind of sacrilegious and profane procession, all the organ pipes, vestments (both copes and surplices,) together with the leaden cross, which had been newly sawn down from over the green yard pulpit, and the service books and singing books that could be had, were carried to the fire in the public market-place; a lewd wretch walking before the train, his cope trailing in the dirt, with a service book in his hand, imitating, in an impious scorn, the tune, and usurping the words, of the litany used formerly in the church. Near the public cross all these monuments of idolatry must be sacrificed to the fire, not without much ostentation of a zealous joy, in discharging ordinances, to the cost of some, who professed how much they had longed to see that day. Neither was it any news, on this guild-day, to have the cathedral now

If we pass on to the Restoration, when the deprived clergy returned to their forlorn and desolate churches, we shall find them not only borne down by age and infirmity, but so impoverished and straitened in their circumstances by successive trials and afflictions, that they were destitute both of the means and the power of restoring the breach which had been so recently and wantonly made. All they were able to do to their churches was, to "strengthen and secure such parts as seem decayed and dangerous."^(a) What was in their case inability, in the succeeding generations grew into indifference and neglect. Men were satisfied with keeping our churches in *tenantable* repair, and the cheapest mode by which this could be accomplished was sure to meet their approbation. Hence the introduction of the lath-and-plaster system, by which so many of our churches have been disfigured; and from that period, to the beginning of the present century, what indifference has been shown by churchmen to the preservation of our churches! How few new ones have been built; how many old ones have been allowed to fall into decay, or deprived of their ecclesiastical character!

To what shall we impute this change in the views and conduct of the people? May we not attribute it to our departure from Catholic principles;^(b) to the slumber which seems to have overspread the minds both of clergy and laity; to the low standard of religious doctrine and practice, especially during the last century; to the abuse of power in the office-bearers of our church, and to the ignorance and want of architectural knowledge in those who have professed to restore or build them? What, for instance, has been done for the restoration or preservation of the church of St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton, during the last two centuries? Judging from the parish accounts, large sums of money have been expended; and if they had been properly applied, instead of presenting, as it recently did, something between a "cathedral and a ruin," it would have been in a state of perfect repair, a great blessing to the parish, and the glory of the

open on all sides, to be filled with musketeers, waiting for the major's return, drinking and tobaccoing as freely as if it were turned into an alehouse."—Bishop Hall's "Hard Measure."

"From the first opposition to the decorous ceremonies of the national church, by the simple Puritans, the next stage was that of ridicule and obloquy. They actually baptized horses in the churches, at the fonts; and the jest of that day was, that the Reformation was now a thorough one in England, since our horses went to church."—D'Israeli's "Curiosities of Literature."

^(a) White's *Selborne*.

^(b) No one, I hope, can be so ignorant as to suppose I intend *Roman* Catholic. I mean the "one Catholic and Apostolic Church" of the Nicene Creed. "The whole body of men throughout the world professing the faith of the Gospel, and obedience unto God by Christ according unto it, not destroying their own profession by any errors evering the foundation, or unholiness of conversation, are and may be called the *visible Catholique Church of Christ*."—Declaration of Facts and Order owned and practised in the Congregational Churches, London, 1659, &c., p. 18.

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neighbourhood. But how have our parochial funds been spent? Not in preserving the fair proportions of the edifice, not in preventing its decay, not in providing for the increased population of the parish; but in erecting galleries, pulling down chancel screens,^(a) blocking-up windows, whitewashing, colouring, and plastering pillars and walls; building high square pews, and a hundred other unwarrantable disfigurements. May we not also ascribe many of the evils we are now suffering to the system of jobbing—not unusually practised in former days? May we not also trace to the same source the opposition to church rates? The old practices of "church work and parish pay" have not only ruined many of our parish churches, but alienated the affections of many from our communion.

It is not intended by these remarks to cast any reflection upon individuals, but to expose a system which, it is feared, is practised in some parishes in the present day,—of appropriating money raised by a church-rate to any but church purposes.

I have taken the following items, *verbatim et literatim*, from two or three pages of a rate-book made about fifty years since: I need scarcely say that such are not found here now:—

	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
My own Bill	7 2 0	Paid for Drink at Shoreditch, on	
Paid Dame Stibbs for turning on		the Perambulation	0 16 0
the Water	1 8 6	Gave 3 men for carrying the Pillory	
Paid the men for forcing the Engine	0 2 0	from the Castle door to the Church	
3 Dinners and Beer at the Sessions	0 6 6	after the Man was Pillored	0 1 0
The Processioning Dinner . . .	2 0 0	Paid Visitation Dinner	2 7 0
To Punch, Wine, Brandy, Beer, &c.	2 1 4	North Street Pump repaired	0 3 6
Paid for Ringing for good news .	1 1 0	Trying the Engine	0 10 0
Paid 12 men for being in Church		Beer for Keeby at the Bells	0 2 6
all night	0 12 0	Gave a Woman to go out of Town	0 0 6
Expenses at the same time for Eat-		Paid for 2 Hedgehogs	0 0 7
ing, Drinking, &c.	1 0 0	Paid Mr. Hooper the Visitation	
Paid one year's run of the water .	3 12 0	Supper	0 19 10

The Church has suffered much in consequence of the miserable stipends paid to the clergy, especially in our large towns and cities. They have a larger amount of labour, and more claims on their resources, than in rural districts, and their incomes are usually much less. The tithes of town parishes are generally in the hands of deans and chapters, or of lay impro priators, and the amount paid in lieu of tithes to the incumbent is of a very trifling amount; the rest of his stipend is supplied by fees and Easter offerings.^(b) This is an evil that cries aloud for a remedy: it ought

^(a) The gallery across the chancel and south transept was taken down in 1824; the gallery in the small north aisle was erected in 1708, and removed in 1826.

^(b) This is a very objectionable mode of collecting a clergyman's stipend. It is no uncommon thing to hear persons say, if a clergyman does not preach or act according to their notions of

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not so to be. The rule of the Gospel is, "that those who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." The incumbent, in too many cases, unable to meet the numerous demands on his limited means, has been driven to hold other cures, or engage in tuition to eke out his existence; perhaps non-resident, and only able to perform Divine Service in his own parish once on a Sunday. This painful state of things has shown itself not only in the increase of irreligion, and the decrease of Church feeling and affection, but in the ruinous state of many of our once beautiful parish churches, for where there is no love to God, there will be none to His house.^(a) Can we wonder at the spread of dissent during the last century? May it not be laid down as an axiom, that it will make its way in exact proportion to the neglect of the people by the ministry of the Church? When we consider that a few years since there was only one resident parochial clergyman in the whole town of Taunton, is it a matter of surprise that there should be now TEN dissenting meeting-houses, all within a very few hundred yards of the parish church?^(b) I do not find fault with this; those who have dissented from the church have done no more than their duty; the church, alas, has neglected hers! Though no one can be more sensible than I am of the evils of division, or more desirous of unity in the church, I have never considered it any part of my duty to inveigh against those who dissent from us, in a parish where the church was inadequate to supply the spiritual food which the population needed. It has been my desire to remove the evil, instead of complaining of the consequences; to increase the powers of the church; to enlarge its tents

right or wrong, that they will, in order to show their ill-will and their consequence, withhold their Easter offerings, by way of punishment. Clergymen ought not to be exposed to the ill-nature and unchristianlike conduct of such individuals; it is true, these offerings are especially exempted from the operation of the Tithe Commutation Act, and may be recovered before the justices of the peace, under the Small Tithes Act, by 4 & 5 Vict, c. 36 (See Burn's Ecclesiastical Law, ninth edition, by Dr. Phillimore). But who would like to engage in the disagreeable duty of enforcing these "dues?" Some further legislative enactment on this subject would be of service to the Church, and a great benefit to "poor vicars."

^(a) "Wherefore all they that have little mind or devotion to repair and build God's temple, are to be counted people of much ungodliness, spurning against good order in Christ's Church, despising the true honour of God, with evil example, offending and hindering their neighbours, otherwise well and godly disposed. The world thinketh it but a trifl to see their churches in ruin and decay. But whoso doth not lay to their helping hands, they sin against God and his holy congregation. For if it had not been sin to neglect and slightly regard the re-edifying and building up again of his temple, God would not have been so much grieved, and so soon have plagued his people, because they builded and decked their own houses so gorgeously, and despised the house of God their Lord. It is a sin and shame to see so many churches so ruinous, and so foully decayed, almost in every corner!"—Homily for Repairing and keeping Clean and Comely Adorning of Churches.

^(b) Not many years since there was only one duty at St. James's in this town. The clergyman held two other cures in addition; and for the *three* services, after riding about twelve miles on a Sunday, received for his services about £60. I am glad to say there are now eight clergymen in the town.

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and strengthen its stakes, that it might be indeed the people's church, and thus to take away all reasonable pretence for separation. Restore to the clergy what they ought to enjoy, and they will then be able, without "pastoral aid," or "curates' fund" societies, to provide for the spiritual wants of their now, in many cases, destitute parishes. This is, however, I fear, a consummation devoutly to be wished, rather than seriously to be expected; but are there no means by which the evil may be lessened, if not entirely removed? I ventured not long since to introduce to the notice of the Archbishop of Canterbury, a plan of which his grace was pleased to express his approval. It was to give a power to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to advance money to the patrons of livings, at a certain rate of interest, a portion of the principal to be paid off every year, and the whole in thirty years, for the purchase of the great tithes of the parishes of which they are the patrons, for the purpose of again *annexing them to the living*. The plan is precisely the same as that which enables incumbents to obtain aid for the erection of parsonage houses, under what is called the "Gilbert Act." I have reason to believe that if a plan something like the one I have suggested were adopted, the tithes of many of our large and populous parishes would again gradually revert to their rightful owners.^(a)

"If lay-impropriators would but consider by what fraudulent means these tithes were originally taken from the church; if they would but remember for how many centuries this property has been devoted to sacred purposes; if they would but allow their minds to dwell upon the repulsive and startling effect which is produced by the fact, that where God once had all, He has now so little and they so much; I cannot but think that what may not be required by justice would be supplied by piety, and that the offerings of a free-will devotion would, in a far more noble and effectual manner, do that which legislative enactments might perhaps do, but perhaps could not do without committing injustice."^(b) When Robert Boyle "understood what a

^(a) Burnet states, in his memorial to the Princess Sophia, in 1703, as one consequence of the great tithes being diverted, "the poor curate, who says the prayers, hath scarcely bread to eat—a miserable case!" He further adds, that Queen Mary and Archbishop Tillotson were upon councils to have raised a fund to buy in the advowsons and impropriations so diverted, and to have "endowed the parochial chreches with them again—God send it one day in your highness's power (p. 79).—In 1663, the excellent mother of the heavenly-minded Nicholas Ferrar "came to a resolution to restore the glebe lands and tithes to the church of Little Gidding, which some fourscore years before had been taken away. The following is an extract of the prayer which accompanied the gift:—"Be graciously pleased, Lord, to receive to the use of Thy church this small portion of that large estate which thou hast bestowed upon her, the unworthiest of Thy servants. Lord redeem Thy right, whereof Thou hast been too long disseised by the world, both in the possessions, and in the person of Thy hand-maid."—Wordsworth's Eccles. Biog., vol. v., p. 159.

^(b) Speech of James R. Hope, B.C.L., in the House of Lords, on behalf of the Deans and Chapters against the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Bill.

share he had in impropriations, he ordered very large gifts to be made to the incumbents in those parishes, and to the widows of such as died before he had resolved on this charity."^(a) How many widows' hearts would "dance for joy," and how many over-worked and ill-paid incumbents and poor vicars would gratefully acknowledge the justice and bless the memory of all who would "go and do likewise!"

The Church has likewise suffered grievously from the abominable pew system—I mean not the building only, but the Church itself. Most cordially do I rejoice at the war commenced against pews, and trust it will cease only with their entire extermination. "Perverted taste, perverted feeling, perverted principles have reared them, and we have borne with them so long only because habit has accustomed us to this abomination." Among the many reasons that may be advanced for their abolition, I would introduce the following:—

1. *Because the pew system tends to keep the poor from our Church.* It is painful to find how the affections of many of our poor are alienated from the Church of England, and, in many cases, this may be traced to the exclusive system unhappily introduced amongst us. The poor are almost literally shut out of our Church. One great box after another has been erected till there is no longer room for them: or if "accommodation," as it is called, be found, it is usually the furthest from the clergyman, or under a gallery, or in the darkest and coldest place in the church: sometimes stoves and tables are introduced into the rich man's pew, which, in addition to his crimson curtains, brass rods, and soft cushions, make a small sitting-room for his family. It is in vain to call the Church of England the poor man's Church whilst, upon her present system, she is emphatically the Church of the rich! I believe it may be said that there is no other Church in existence which thus favours the rich at the expense of inconveniencing the poor!^(b) This practice is severely censured by the Word of God.^(c)

2. *Because pews occasion a loss of room in our churches.* It is gratifying to see how many new churches are springing up in every part of our country. May this glorious work continue, till there shall be "a fold for every sheep and a shepherd for every fold!" We must not, however, in our zeal for the erection of new churches, forget the old ones. Ought we not to make the most of the accommodation which they afford? In most old churches, by a different arrangement of pews, or, what would be much better, by their entire destruction, a large increase of sittings might be obtained for

^(a) See "Burnet's Lives."

^(b) There were no free sittings for the poor in St. Mary's church previous to the present arrangement; there are now between 300 and 400. The population of the parish is 8019.

^(c) See James ii., 1—6.

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the benefit of the parishioners. The fact has been clearly proved, that at least *one-fifth* of the available space on the floor of a church is lost by the erection of pews.^(a)

3. *Because pews excite quarrels, and perpetuate angry feelings.* Any interference with a parish pew has been looked upon as a trespass and an invasion of rights, and been the fruitful source of most distressing scenes and excited feelings. A whole parish has sometimes been kept in a state of ferment for months, and even years, on account of some real or imaginary injury connected either with the erection or appropriation of a pew. Where is the clergyman who has not been called upon to endeavour to allay the bad feelings between his parishioners on this *verata quæstio*? How often has he been told by some unkind and unfeeling member of his flock, that he does not choose to come to church till the churchwardens have provided him a pew! Oh, when will men learn wisdom, and cease to hazard their souls' eternal welfare by these unchristian and petty quarrels?

4. *Because pews afford every facility for irreverent behaviour.* What talking, sleeping, carving names, and all kinds of improprieties^(b) are sometimes carried on by thoughtless individuals behind the curtain of a high pew! The clergyman ought to be able to observe every person in the church, which it is often impossible he can do, on account of the obscure corners in which persons seclude themselves. The occupants frequently sit and stand opposite to each other, and have the best opportunities they can desire for distracting each other's attention, and interrupting the course of their devotions; it is impossible that they can kneel; and even in long pews most persons find that their height renders kneeling so painful that it is impossible to continue it; and in the new churches, where the pews are lower and more uniform, they are generally so narrow, that one can only just sit in them; kneeling is out of the question; *so that, generally speaking, more than two-thirds of every congregation sit down during the whole time of prayer.* This fact alone is enough to make every sincere worshipper wish to get rid of pews.

5. *Because pews enable ill-disposed and selfish persons, who neither occupy them themselves nor allow others to do so, greatly to lessen the efficiency of the church and to deprive the parishioners of their just rights.* Large pews are sometimes claimed by single individuals, or by persons having very small

(a) "The fact is sufficient, that where 300 sit in large square pews, 400 can be accommodated in open benches, which are both cooler and really more comfortable."—"The Advantage of Open Seats," a paper read before the Exeter Architectural Society, by the Reverend J. Medley, A.M.

We have gained nearly 400 additional sittings by the present arrangement.

(b) I have known of cases in which cards have been introduced.

families, and are to be seen either quite empty or not nearly full; and it is a rare event to find the individual who habitually absents himself from church, or has more room than he wants, offering to give up his unoccupied sittings so long as he can possibly retain them.^(a) “*It is a notorious fact, that the great sticklers for their vested rights as pew-owners are the most irregular attendants at church, and that many of them seldom enter it,—mighty supporters of the outer frame-work, but caring nothing for that which is ‘all glorious within;’ ready to spend their last shilling in defence of an illegal purchase, but indifferent to the welfare of hundreds of the poor, who have none to speak for them or appeal in behalf of their invaded rights!*”^(b) This “dog and manger” system, as it has been called, has brought with it an innumerable train of evils. The rudeness sometimes shown to an individual, if he have unfortunately strayed into the wrong pew, is distressing in the extreme. I have myself heard such unkind and ill-natured remarks, and witnessed such unbecoming scenes in churches which I have served, that the recollection at this moment fills me with pain and sorrow.^(c) I will only add,—

6. *Because wherever open seats have been introduced, a large increase in the congregation, especially of the poor, has invariably followed.* What is the great object of the Christian ministry? The glory of God in the salvation of souls! Everything, therefore, that is conducive to this great end must be a blessing. The most pleasing results have followed in all churches where pews have been abolished.^(d) There has always been a large augmentation of regular attendants upon the preaching of that Word “which is able to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

It may be asked, do we really propose that the congregation should seat themselves where and how they can, as places may happen to be vacant? By no means. All that we insist on is, the necessity of getting rid of

^(a) I have been informed of a parish in this diocese, the church of which is seldom little more than half full, yet the proprietor of a boarding-school is obliged to take his pupils to church by turns, *i. e.*, half in the morning and half in the evening, because the accommodating *pew-holders* will not allow them to occupy the *empty seats*! Would that this were a solitary case! Does it not call for episcopal interference? Who, that has any love to God or man, would wish to see such an abominable system continued?

^(b) See Reverend J. Medley, on the subject of Open Seats.

^(c) I have on several occasions been obliged to stop the service, in consequence of some dispute between the rival occupants of a pew.

^(d) The Rev. J. Medley has most satisfactorily shown, in the paper already referred to, and which I should like to see circulated in the shape of a tract,—“That the pew system is not only contrary to all sound principles of architecture, and fatal to all excellence in the interior arrangement of a church, but that it is alike inconvenient, illegal, and unchristian, and that the arguments in its favour, and the objections raised against the system of open seats, properly understood, are fallacious and untenable.”

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distinctions between rich and poor in the house of God, of affording accommodation to all, and of destroying the great unsightly packing-boxes which at present deform our churches. Every householder in the parish should have a definite place allotted to him for himself and family. Let our seats be appropriated, but let them be unenclosed; of one uniform pattern, and so arranged that high and low, rich and poor, "shall worship one with another." Courtesy and regularity would assign seats which would not be disturbed. There must, however, be *no exclusion*.

With regard to the distribution of seats at St. Mary's, the Bishop proposes, when our repairs and restorations are completed, to issue a commission for the purpose of appropriating them to the parishioners. The commissioners will therefore relieve the churchwardens from a very onerous duty: they will, it is supposed, allot to those who are regular attendants at church a sufficient number of sittings for their accommodation. Those who do not attend the church cannot, of course, need them; nor will any have more sittings than they *actually require for their own use*.

The system of monopolising and trafficking^(a) in seats will, it is hoped, be for ever abolished, and that, in accordance with the principles of our holy faith, the injunctions of the Church, and the law of the land,^(b) "we shall not overlook the claims of all the parishioners to be seated, if sittings can be afforded them." I here give several extracts from the judgment of Sir John Nicholl, in the Arches Court, in the case of *Fuller v. Lane*, ii., 419, as to the law of parish pews:—

"By the general law, and of common right, all the pews in a parish church are the common property of the parish: they are for the use, in

(a) I am acquainted with a church, not many miles from Taunton, in which the pews, a few years since, were claimed by six or eight individuals. In the same parish an individual who purchased a seat of the churchwardens for a few shillings, immediately went and sold it to a gentleman for five pounds, of course pocketing the difference.

While I am writing these pages, a sinner has applied to the churchwardens to have certain sittings hitherto standing in her name transferred to some other party, she being about to leave the town. *This has usually been done on payment of half-a-crown. The churchwardens very properly told her that they could now do no such thing. She said she thought it was a very hard case, for she had lost five sittings already, and had ONLY ELEVEN left!*

There is another practice connected with pews, very injurious to the interests of the Church of England, and which, by throwing the seats open, would in some measure be prevented. In large towns where there are several churches, it is not an unusual practice for persons to hold pews at each church; so that on one Sunday they are at one church, and the next at another,—here in the morning, there in the evening, just as they may be attracted by their favourite preacher, or, as a person told me the other day, he came to St. Mary's once a quarter, just to assert his right to his pew!—and he might have added, "for the pleasure it will give me of turning out intruders." If such semi-churchmen did but consult their own edification—value the esteem of their own clergy—desire the welfare of the Church—or wish to render obedience to the law of the land, they would do what their duty bids them,—attend their proper place of worship, the parish church.

(b) *Fuller v. Lane*, 2 Add. Rep., 424.

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common, of the parishioners, who are *all* entitled to be seated orderly and conveniently, so as best to provide for the accommodation of all. The churchwardens are bound in particular not to accommodate the higher classes *beyond their real wants*, to the exclusion of their poorer neighbours. No faculty is deemed here, or at common law, good, to the extent of entitling any person who is a non-parishioner to a seat even in the body of the church.

“ Whenever the occupant of a seat in the body of the church ceases to be a parishioner, his right to the pew, however founded, and how valid soever during his continuance in the parish, at once ceases, though the contrary is very often supposed; as for instance, that he may sell or assign it, or let it to rent, as part and parcel of his *property* in the parish.

“ The result, on the whole, of these faculties is, that in many churches the parishioners at large are deprived, in a great degree, of suitable accommodation, by means of exclusive rights to pews, either actually vested in particular families, by faculty or prescription, or at least, and which is the same thing as to any practical result, supposed to be so vested. I add this last, because in very many instances these exclusive rights are merely suppositions, and would turn out, upon investigation, to be no right at all. With respect to the poor, indeed, every possible reason exists why no concessions should be made at all likely to infringe upon their due accommodation in the several parish churches. It is to be presumed that they are the persons most in want of religious instruction; and their title as such to receive it is expressly recognised by the divine Founder of Christianity himself.”

How many evils have been introduced and continued in the Church of England, and how many magnificent and costly structures have been allowed to fall into ruin, in consequence of the apathy and indifference of her professed members! She has indeed suffered from the ravages of Popery, from the violence of fanaticism, from the inroads of dissent; but, after all, her greatest foes have been those of her own house. There have not been wanting men who have boasted of their orthodoxy and churchmanship, and their love of the venerable institutions of their country, and their dread of any supposed innovation; but who, alas! have seldom shown the sincerity of these professions by any corresponding fruits. It too frequently happens that the man who is the loudest in his profession of attachment to the Church is the least willing to support it. Ask him to contribute of the abundance with which the Lord hath blessed him, and then, like the shade of Creusa—

“ Deseruit, tenuesque recessit in auras.”

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Oh, that all the nominal members of the Church, and ministers of the Church, the reformed Catholic Church of our land, breathed the full spirit of her formularies, imbibed the full power of her doctrines, and exemplified their full force in their lives! Then no labour would be esteemed too great, no sacrifice too severe, in order to advance her welfare and increase her usefulness.

The unhappy divisions by which the Church of England is rent in twain is a source of deep regret and of much anxiety, not only to her professed members, but to all who desire the welfare of our common country. It requires but little sagacity or foresight to perceive how these things must terminate if peace be not speedily restored, and if Infinite Mercy prevent not. The lip of Truth has said—and who shall gainsay it?—"A house divided against itself cannot stand." We would have all things done "decently and in order," because the Church herself enjoins it, and the word of God commands it; but surely the judgment and prudence of those may be questioned who seek the revival of ornaments and ceremonies many of which are of doubtful authority, while others are acknowledged to be "things indifferent in themselves," especially when their introduction cannot at the present time but be injurious to the interests of the church.^(a) If wisdom be given to our rulers to discern the signs of the times and allow to public opinion its due weight, the Anglican church may yet be saved. But it is quite clear, that if they do not take up the matter, others will; and that what might have been, by God's blessing, wisely arranged by those to whom it more especially belongs to order such matters, will be left to the chances of popular discussion and the decisions of an unsuitable tribunal.

The safety and usefulness of the Church consist not in her rejection or adoption of these outward observances, but in the Divine blessing and her spiritual efficiency. If it be right to agitate the revival of these matters, the present is certainly not the convenient season. The people of the country are perishing for lack of knowledge; they are asking for bread,—it were cruel to give them a stone. They are craving for spiritual sustenance,—we should not offer them a scorpion. If we must contend, let it not be for the introduction of crosses or surplices, candlesticks or credence-tables, but for "the faith once delivered to the saints." If we

^(a) "Whatever little advantages may be compassed by these practices, they are certainly very dangerous ones, as tending to divide that Church whose only strength and safety consist in its union. These projects have been once already tried, with a very lamentable success. For the miseries of the Civil War were not owing to the separatists and sectaries (for these were afterwards brooded in Cromwell's army), but to the quarrels and distinctions made between Church-of-England men themselves. These unhappy differences kindled *the first coals of the Civil War*, and blew up the whole nation into flames. *And if this be not warning sufficient against trying the like experiments in future, I know not what is.*"—Dr. Nicholl, on the Common Prayer, Pref. Ed. 1710.

must strive, let it be who shall most advance the welfare of the Church, by the multiplication of her temples, the education of her children, the augmentation of her bishops, priests, and deacons, and the advancement of every other object that will most facilitate and best secure the publication of that Word by which alone men must be saved. These objects would, indeed, be worth contending for, not by men only, but by the angels in heaven.

Let the Church attempt great things, and expect great things. She is not straitened in God, but in herself. Her field of toil is the "world." Let her sphere of action be enlarged, her charity expanded, till this scene of her labours shall bud and blossom as the garden of the Lord.

In her triumphant march to subdue all to the sceptre of the Redeemer's grace, let her remember that, in the memorable words of Bishop Hall, there must be "no peace with Rome;" Popery must be destroyed, it cannot be reformed. Blessed be God, the spirit that rose up at the call of Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, breathes in the Church of England still, and, at whatever cost, will stand between the truth and Rome. The Word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit, is the only weapon which the Saviour authorises and the Holy Ghost will bless.^(a) Jesus lifted up from the earth must still draw all men to himself. The bleeding Cross is still the banner in whose sign we overcome; the love of Christ must still be the constraining motive. I still hope we can see, amid these alarming tokens of strife and wrath, signs of better things and a brighter day, *when our breaches shall be healed and when we shall be thoroughly humbled and penitent*. Do we not, in the midst of the spiritual sterility which the judicial withholding of the dew of God's blessing has brought upon the Church and the world, discern "a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand?"—a token that the heavens shall again be opened, and copious showers of grace be once more outpoured upon the Church, to refresh the parched and withered soil, and to make it once more bring forth the manifold fruits of the Spirit, to the glory of Christ and the blessing of His people? Amid the conflicting opinions and unseemly dissensions by which the Church is divided, disquieted, and injured, there are still those who are attached to her doctrines and her discipline, her ceremonies and her formularies—men who value their privileges, who are awake to a sense of their responsibilities, and who desire to co-operate with her in the glorious work of encircling the earth with the sacred girdle of evangelical truth and apostolic order.^(b)

^(a) "Our weapons are faith, hope, charity, righteousness, truth, patience, prayer unto God; and our sworde, wherewith we smite our enemies, we heate and batter, and beare down all falsehooде, is the *Word of God*. With these weapons, under the banner of the Crosse of Christe we do fight, ever having our eye upon our Grand Master, Duke, and Captiue—Christe."—RIDLEY, Bishop and Martyr.

^(b) To every colony of Britain she has resolved, God being her helper, to send forth a bishop.

The conquests of England's sons are preparing the way for the yet wider and wider extension of England's Church, which, whatever betide the fortunes of the nation, seems destined to set up in every corner of the earth temples and altars consecrated to God, where the Word of Christ shall be purely preached and the memorial of His dying love duly administered by the ambassadors of Him who said—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." It is not to gratify the grovelling desires of politicians or speculators, or to flatter the pride of man's heart, that God's providence has transferred the centre of civilization and power to this insignificant island, scarcely visible upon the map of the world, yet upon whose dominions the sun never sets, before whose arms the might of ancient nations sink, and at the approach of which the walls of the "celestial empire," long impregnable, have fallen to the ground. Is it for so paltry an object that English ambition and energy have been permitted to join to the worlds of Alexander and Caesar another world yet vaster than them both, and to make the language, literature, and laws of England nearly as ubiquitous as the very light we see or the air we breathe?

We interpret not thus the ways and works of the Almighty—we read in these marvellous ordinations of God's never-failing providence another purpose, and look forward with hope to an issue higher far than man's ambition strives for—even the universal propagation of the true faith of Christ, the advancement of the period when the "kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever."

I had no intention, when I commenced these pages, of touching on such a variety of topics—a volume might, indeed, be written upon each; they were, however, so pressed upon my attention by the circumstances of the times that I could not well reject them. I hope they will subserve the interests of that Church dear to me as my own existence. These pages contain the results of my observations and experience on subjects of deep importance, and it is with the hope of their being useful that I present them, with unaffected diffidence, to the reader.

Before I conclude, I desire gratefully to record the kind services of several ladies of my congregation, some of whom are now removed to a distance, for the varied aid they have rendered me in this "work of faith and labour of love."

To other ladies of my parish I beg also to express my thankfulness for their munificent offerings to the church, of the richly-carved stone font, the handsome altar-cloth, cushions for the pulpit and desk, together with the

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linen for the communion. To a few young men my thanks are also offered for their kind present of a splendidly-bound bible, prayer-book, and altar services, and to Mr. Davis, builder, of this town, for two handsome chairs to be placed within the communion enclosure.

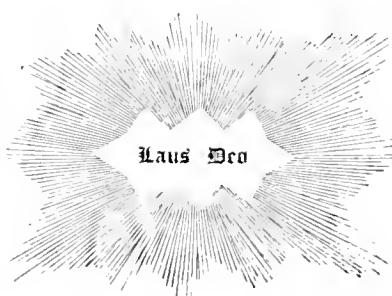
To the churchwardens of the parish, Messrs. Cox, Easton, and Jeboult, my especial acknowledgments are due, and are here most willingly and cordially offered, for the great aid they have rendered me on this occasion, and for the diligent, patient, and unwearied manner in which they have discharged the difficult duties of their office.

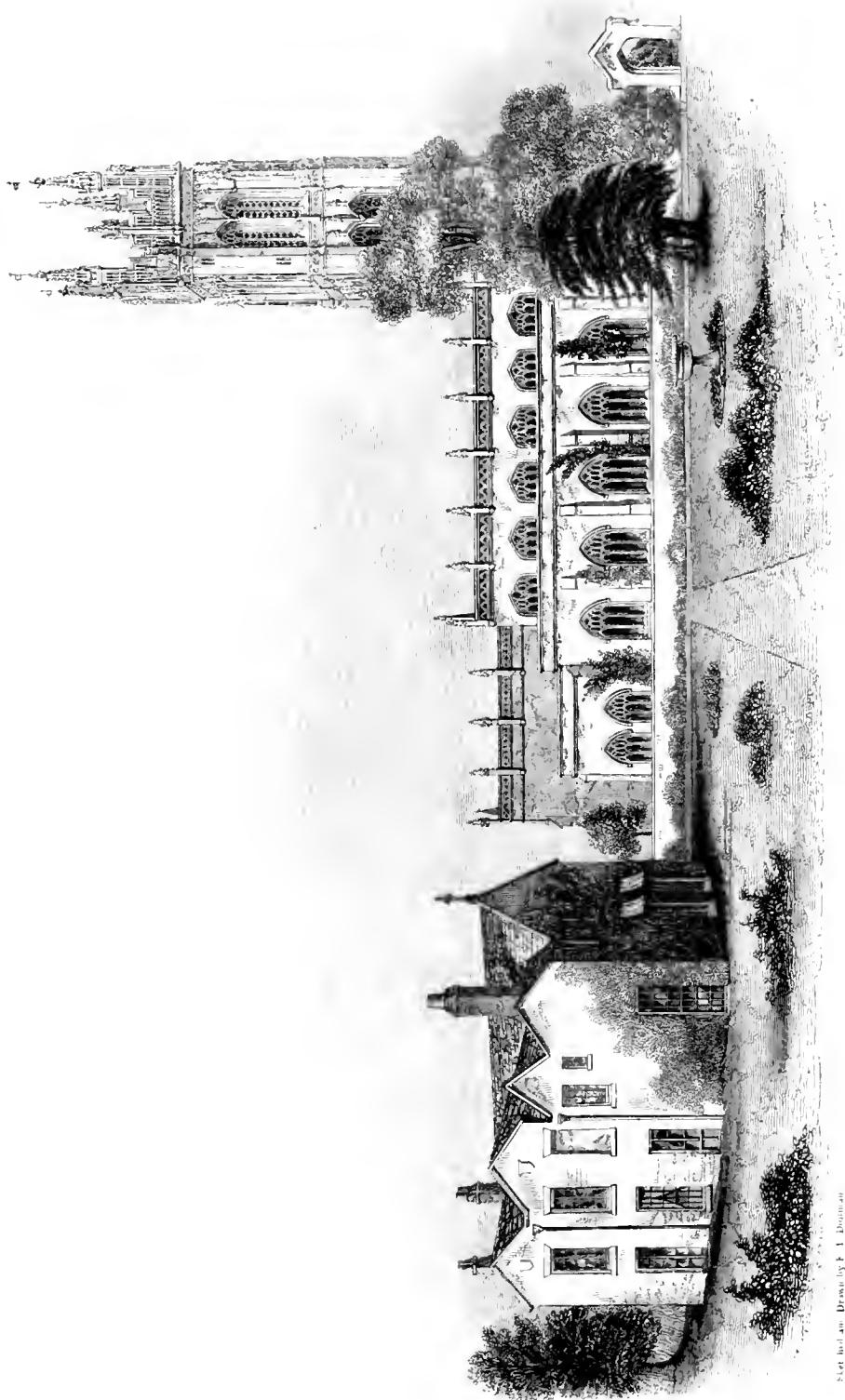
To the various religious communities in the town, I take this opportunity of stating how much I appreciate the kindly feelings they have manifested, and the assistance they have afforded me in the restoration of the parish church. To the numerous subscribers to this work, and to those who have kindly contributed to the Restoration Fund, I here present my grateful thanks. The whole of the expenses connected with this undertaking is likely to exceed *seven thousand pounds*, upwards of *four thousand of which* had to be provided on the responsibility of the vicar alone. This sum is much larger than was at first contemplated, and I regret that there is still a large deficiency to be provided for: I hope, however, that my friends, and those of the Church, will not be "weary in well doing," but that they will aid, by their exertions and contributions, the advancement of that day—which will be the happiest one in my life—when the church of St. Mary Magdalene shall be completely finished, and the church account balanced. To my parishioners—those over whom the "Holy Ghost hath made me overseer"—my thanks are due for the interest they have felt, and the good feeling they have shown, in this undertaking. Few have been the differences of opinion that have existed among us—especially latterly; the wonder has been, that in a large parish like this, and in a work of such magnitude, they should have been so few. Nothing has occurred, and I trust never will occur, to interrupt the harmony of our friendship, or impede our usefulness; we shall, I hope, though we may occasionally differ on other matters, be always found united in any effort to promote the welfare of the town and the interests of morality and religion. We have been engaged in a work of which we may justly feel proud; our church is not only the glory of the town, but of the surrounding country: and it is to be hoped that what we have done will have the effect of inducing the parishes in our neighbourhood to follow our example. Above all, it will call down the Divine approbation, and I take it to be the happy prelude of brighter and better days for the Church of England in this parish. When we are slumbering in the silent tomb, many shall rise up to call God blessed

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in this temple of his grace. Oh! it is the cheering thought that many precious souls shall be born there that has animated and cheered us on in our difficult, and sometimes almost insurmountable, path. Suffer, however, the word of affectionate exhortation. Take care that you never again allow your church to fall into a state of dilapidation. Not only will its condition be the criterion of your own religion, but the mode of conducting Divine Service and everything else in the parish will be sure to be influenced by it. Cheerfully contribute to its support—away with the utilitarian view that considers anything good enough for a church! Let us serve God, not only with the best member that we have, but provide everything of the *best* for His service. Love your church; diligently attend the services performed there; pray for a blessing on the labours of the clergy, “and we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake. And be at peace among yourselves.” Your own interests are identified with her welfare: “they shall prosper that love Thee!”

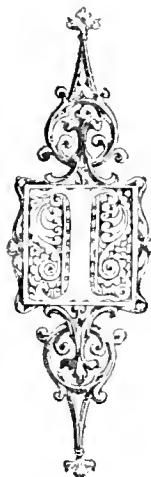
As it was in the first ages of the Church, so it is now. “Not by power or by might, but my spirit, saith the Lord.” Without the influences of God’s Holy Spirit, our “beautiful house” will be bereft of its glory; it will be the casket without the precious jewel; like the parched and barren soil without the gentle dew or the fertilising influences of the sun. So will all our efforts be, without the dew of God’s blessing and the life-giving influences of the sun of righteousness. May God, in his abundant mercy bestow upon us “showers of blessings,” and make the Church of our fathers—nay, our own Church—to us and our children, none other than the house of God and the gate of Heaven!





THE CHURCH AND VICARAGE, ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

dditional notices connected with
t. Mary's Church and the town of Taunton.



Suffragan Bishops—Archdeacons—Biographical Notices of the Vicars of
St. Mary's—Monumental Inscriptions, &c.

In the year 1535 an Act was passed by the Legislature, setting forth that certain dioceses in England required the aid of Assistant or **Suffragan Bishops**, who were to be "honest, discreet, spiritual persons, learned, and of good conversation." The bishop of the diocese was to name a fit and proper person as his suffragan, who was to be approved by the King, and by him recommended to the Archbishop of Canterbury for consecration.

Taunton is one of the places appointed as the see of such bishops. In the year 1538, William Finche, Prior of Bremar, was consecrated Bishop of Taunton, to act as a suffragan to the Bishop of Bath and Wells. We are not able to furnish the names of his successors. The Act authorising the appointment of suffragan bishops was repealed in 1553, after the accession of Queen Mary, but revived again in 1559, under Elizabeth, and *is still in force*. It is much to be desired that the powers conferred by it were again enforced; for that there has long been a general desire for additional bishops in the Anglican Church is unquestionable. The population of England and Wales at the passing of the above Act did not, perhaps, exceed two or three millions: it now probably amounts to sixteen. If we compare the duties of the English and Irish bishops, we shall find the latter, after the reduction in the number of sees by the Act in 1833, superintending, on an average, about one hundred incumbents each; while the English dioceses contain, on an average, four hundred and

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twelve parishes each. If one hundred parishes are sufficient to employ an Irish bishop, why should England be so much worse provided for? If we were placed on an equal footing with Ireland, we should have one hundred and seven bishops.^(a)

Looking at the invariable rule of the ancient Church, to place a bishop in every great city, for the purpose of giving energy, unity, and consistency to the large body of clergy collected there, it seems strange that our large towns should have been left so long without resident bishops. Romanism has, with its usual quick-sightedness, availed itself of our deficiencies, and fixed the residence of its pretended bishops in populous places. In some of these places Romish ecclesiastics are gradually assuming a position and importance which can only arise from the Church of England not having any episcopal superintendence in those localities. A diocese ought to be of such dimensions that a bishop might, without much difficulty, visit *personally*, once a year, all the parishes under his jurisdiction, for the purpose of examining on the spot all the particulars which concern the spiritual well-being of the people, to preach the Gospel, and to administer confirmation, without those large assemblies which are productive of so many inconveniences and such grievous consequences. The extent of our dioceses has rendered this efficient system of superintendence wholly impossible; and, as a painful consequence, discipline has become relaxed and the unity of the Church impaired. Archdeacons and rural deans are, no doubt, to a certain extent, valuable assistants to a bishop, but they are *only* assistants; they are not invested with episcopal authority; they are not the chief pastors of the clergy and people whom they visit officially: they do not speak as those who have authority. The powers of a rural dean are of so limited and questionable character, that his authority (it is to be regretted that it should be so) is regarded in our rural districts with very little respect. The reason is, these offices are of *human* institution, and can never become substitutes for bishops. It is no part of our present design to suggest the mode by which suffragan bishops could again be restored, although it would be a pleasing task to do so. There are, no doubt, some difficulties in the way; but if the attempt were only made, they would, I apprehend, speedily vanish. Two or three years since they would have been fewer—the Church was then beginning to put forth fresh

(a) England possesses, in proportion to her population, a smaller number of bishops than most of the European states. We have only 26 bishops for a population of sixteen millions. France, before the Revolution, had 145 sees; Spain, 60; Greece, 36; Portugal, 14; Italy, Sicily, and the adjoining islands, 263. The Romish Church in Ireland has 30 bishops. Ancient Asia Minor and Northern Africa contain, respectively, 400 and 500 sees. Ancient Egypt, Syria, and Pentapolis, contained 108 episcopal sees.

energy, and to give the promise of abundant fruitfulness. Her fair prospects have, alas! been blighted, and her usefulness impaired, by the unhappy divisions latterly introduced among us. One painful result which has followed, is to weaken the desire, and to lessen the respect, for episcopal authority and superintendence. Let us hope that this is but a temporary obscuration of her efficiency, and that soon she will come forth with renewed vigour, and unite all in the accomplishment of a work, which, under the Divine blessing, must tend greatly to her advancement! The day will again return, we hope, when Taunton shall have its suffragan bishop. The church of St. Mary Magdalene would form a suitable cathedral, and the present vicar and patron—to aid so good a work—would gladly resign his office and the advowson into the hands of the Crown for this particular purpose.^(a)

The first appointment of an *Archdeacon* for Taunton took place in 1106. The archdeaconry comprises four deaneries, viz., Bridgewater, Crewkerne, Dunster, and Taunton, and contains 176 parishes. The following is a list of the archdeacons:—

Robert is supposed to have enjoyed this dignity in 1106.

Godfrey was archdeacon of this diocese (supposed of Taunton), about 1185.

William de Wrotham, 1204. He died 3rd of Henry III.

He was the eldest son of William de Wrotham, warden of the Stannaries in Devonshire and Cornwall, and forester-in-fee of the forest of North-Petherton, in this county. He was engaged in many secular employments. In the sixth of John he was, together with Reginald de Cornhill, receiver of the customs of all the merchants in the kingdom, and accounted in that year for nearly £6,000. In the seventh of John he obtained a charter for a market to be held every Tuesday at the manor of North-Curry, for the benefit of the church of Wells, to which that manor appertained. In the eighth of John he was a trustee to Geoffrey Fitz-Piers, Earl of Essex, upon the founding of the hospital of Sutton, in Yorkshire. On the death of his father he succeeded as heir to his lands, and to the office of forester of North-Petherton, which, on account of his being a clergyman, was executed during his life-time by his brother, Richard de Wrotham.

Hugh de Wilton, 1219.

^(a) For further information, and some valuable remarks respecting suffragan bishops see "Burn's Ecclesiastical Law," ninth edition, by Robert Phillimore, Advocate in Doctors' Commons, &c., vol. i. p. 246. The clumsy piece of legislation, in the shape of the "Ecclesiastical Functions Act," is, as it deserves, justly and universally reprobated. One fruit of this measure is the proposal that the see of Bath and Wells should be united to that of Salisbury! When a bishop is incapacitated by age or infirmity from discharging the duties of his office with comfort to himself or benefit to the Church, why cannot he be allowed to retire, like our judges, on a pension, and his place supplied by another, instead of imposing an additional burden on a neighbouring bishop? It is said, there is no power at present to do so—then the sooner such a power be obtained, the better for the interests of the Church of England.

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Walter St. Quintin, 1244. He died 15th Cal. Jan. (Dec. 18th), 1263.

William Burnell, it is believed, was the next. He was archdeacon in 1294.

Gilbert de Molendinis was instituted 17 Cal. Jun. (May 16th), 1298.

Peter de Aveburi, 1301.

Henry de Chanington, 1308.

Robert Harewood, Dee. 12th, 1320.

William Thringhull, 1371.

Thomas Arundel was made Archdeacon of Taunton at the age of 22, 1373.

He was the son of Robert Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, and was consecrated Bishop of Ely on the 6th of April, 1375. In 1380 he was made Lord Chancellor of England, and translated to the see of York on the 3rd of April, 1388; and was the first that was ever removed from thence to Canterbury. He received his pall on the 19th of February, 1396. He resigned to Richard II. his post of Lord Chancellor, which he had held for ten years. Being convicted of high treason (with the Earl of Arundel, his brother, who was beheaded), he fled to Rome, and his see was given to Roger Walden, Dean of York. Arundel was, however, restored by Henry IV. on his accession to the throne, for which favour the necessary steps were taken to procure of the clergy a tenth for the crown as a subsidy.

The king, not contented with a tenth, afterwards attempted to obtain greater subsidies from the clergy; but the archbishop vigorously opposed them, urging, among other reasons, that though the clergy did not serve personally in the king's wars, yet they were not idle, inasmuch as they daily *prayed* for the king and the realm, as well in time of peace as war. To which the prolocutor of the house of convocation, Sir John Cleyn, replied, "It was no matter for their prayers, so the king might have their money." This prelate severely punished the Lollards or Wicklifites, and forbade the translation of the Bible into the English language. He died on the 20th of February, 1413, exactly a month before King Henry IV., and was buried in the cathedral church of Canterbury; to which he had built a fine spire, called to this day *Arundel steeple*. He left to his palace at Ely a magnificent table, ornamented with gold and precious stones, originally belonging to the King of Spain, and sold by the Black Prince to this bishop for 300 marks. He had the generosity to obtain, by his influence, the see of London for Roger Walden, his adversary, who had succeeded him in the see of Canterbury, after his flight to Rome, but was dispossessed of it on his restoration.

Neapolitanus Cardinalis, 1383.

Ralph de Ergham, 1391.

He was elected Bishop of Salisbury in 1375, from which see he was translated to that of Bath and Wells in 1388. He built the inn, called the George, in Wells, and erected in that city a college, at the end of a lane, called College Lane, for fourteen priests; gave ornaments and plate to the church to the value of £140, and appropriated to the chapter the parsonage of Pucklechurch. He died in 1401.

Thomas Polton or Pulton, Aug. 12th, 1403.

He was Dean of York; Bishop of Hereford, 1420; Bishop of Chichester, 1423;

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from which see he was translated to that of Worcester, 1426. He died at Rome, and was buried in that city.

Nicholas Calton, Sept. 1st, 1416. He died in 1440.

Adam Molines, LL.D., 1440.

He was of the baronial family of the Molines; Dean of Salisbury; Bishop of Chichester, 1445; and Lord Privy Seal. He was slain at Portsmouth by mariners hired for that purpose by Richard, Duke of York, 1445.

Andrew Hales was admitted Jan. 19th, 1445; Archdeacon of Wells, 1450.

Robert Stillington, LL.D., was collated April 20th, 1450; Archdeacon of Wells, 1465.

He was Keeper of the Privy Seal and Lord Chancellor of England; was consecrated Bishop of Bath and Wells, 16th of March, 1466, in the room of John Phreas, who had been elected, but died before consecration. This bishop firmly adhered to the house of York, against that of Lancaster, and countenanced Lambert Simnell in opposing Henry VII., for which he was imprisoned at Windsor in 1487, and, after four years' confinement, died in May, 1491. He was buried in the chapel of Our Lady, in the cloister of Wells cathedral, which he himself had built, and which was afterwards destroyed (together with the great wall of the palace), by Sir John Yates; and within the memory of those who had seen his funeral, his bones were turned out of the leaden coffin in which they were interred.

Richard Langport, May 14th, 1487.

Oliver King was installed July 12th, 1490.

He was sometime Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and Registrar of the Order of the Garter, and Canon of Windsor; one of the Prebendaries of St. Paul's; elected Bishop of Exeter, 1492, from which see he was translated to that of Bath and Wells, in 1495; and Secretary of State to Edward IV. and V., and to Henry VII. He laid the foundation of a new abbey church at Bath.

William Worsley, LL.D., was admitted Feb. 18th, 1492.

Robert Sherburn, A.M., was installed Dec. 16th, 1496.

John Ednam, S.T.P., was installed May 27th, 1505.

Robert Honywood, LL.D., was installed Aug. 18th, 1509. He died Jan. 22nd, 1522, and was buried at Windsor.

Thomas Cranmer, S.T.P., succeeded in 1522, and in 1533 was made Archbishop of Canterbury.

He was born at Aslacton, in Nottinghamshire, and was Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge. He was a theological and polemical writer, eminent for his piety and learning, and for being the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury; but his political character, on account of the variations of his conduct, is differently treated by historians and controversial writers. He assisted in setting up Lady Jane Grey, for which treason Queen Mary pardoned him, but had him burnt for heresy at Oxford, 21st of March, 1556, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.

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John Redmayne was Archdeacon of Taunton in 1547.

It is uncertain how long before this he held this office, or whether there were any between him and Cranmer. He died in November, 1551, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

John Fitzjames, A.M., May 22nd, 1554.

Justinian Lancaster, 1560.

Philip Bisse, S.T.P., was installed May 28th, 1584.

He was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford; was a learned man, and a great lover of books. He had an extensive library, which, at his death, he bequeathed to Wadham College, Oxford, then newly founded, in which is preserved his portrait at full-length, given by the foundress. He died in 1613, and was buried in the chancel of Batcombe church, in this county, where there is an inscription to his memory.

Matthew Suteliffe, LL.D., was installed Jan. 30th, 1586.

Peter Lilye, S.T.P., 1604. He died in 1614.

Samuel Ward, S.T.P., was installed April 29th, 1615.

He was Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, chaplain-extraordinary to King James I. and one of the four divines sent by him to the synod of Dort. He wrote several tracts, and some valuable manuscripts of his are now in Emmanuel College, Cambridge, of which he was Fellow. In 1609 he became Master of Sidney College, in that university. He assisted in translating the Bible, and was a most excellent governor and exact disciplinarian. Being one of the assembly of divines, and of the religious committee, he was, therefore, esteemed a puritan. But in the civil wars of Charles I. he was one of those who consented that the college plate should be coined for the use of his majesty; for which he was deprived of his ecclesiastical preferments, March 30th, 1648, when he was plundered and cast into prison, where he contracted a disease which put a period to his life, in great poverty, about six weeks after his release. Several of his letters are in the collection of Archbishop Usher.

William Piers, S.T.P., was installed Dec. 19th, 1643.

He was the eldest son of Dr. William Piers, Bishop of Bath and Wells, and was rector of Kingsbury. He was eminent for his abilities and virtues, yet in 1654 he was sequestered from his preferments, and, for mere subsistence, married a low woman, who had a little farm, on which he laboured, thrashing his own corn, and selling his apples, butter, eggs, poultry, eheese, &c., in the markets of Ilminster and Taunton; but worse misfortunes befel him, for he became godfather to a child called Charles, and for this suffered imprisonment, from which he was not released till the restoration of Charles II., when he was made doctor in divinity, prebendary of Wells, and rector of Christian-Malford, in Wiltshire. He died in April, 1682, aged seventy, and is buried in Wells cathedral, where there is an inscription to his memory.

Edward Waple, S.T.P., installed April 22nd, 1682.

Edmund Archer, S.T.P., was installed July 26th, 1712.

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George Atwood, S.T.P., 1722.

Lionel Seaman, M.A., 1753.

Francis Potter, M.A., 1758.

William Willes, M.A., 1761.

Thomas Camplin, LL.D., 1767.

John Turner, M.A., 1780.

George Trevallyan, LL.B., son of Sir John Trevallyan, Bart., 1817.

Anthony Hamilton, A.M., Precentor and Canon Res. of Lichfield, &c.

The following is a list of the *vicars* of St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton, from the year 1558, when the parish registers commenced:—

— Dowel was vicar. He was succeeded by

Thomas Woodland, Oct., 1568. He died 1604.

John Goodwin, D.D., 1604.

Edward Clark, March, 1628. He is said to have been a pious and learned man, and was succeeded by

George Newton, Jan. 16, 1631.

He was a native of Devonshire, and was born in 1602. He began his ministry at Bishop's Hull, near Taunton, and was presented to this vicarage by Sir William Portman and Mr. Robert Hill. When the "Book of Sports" came out, by order of Council, in the reign of Charles I., and was commanded to be read in churches, he told his congregation that he read this book as the commandments of men; and he then immediately read the twentieth chapter of Exodus, as the commandments of God; but as these happened to be contradictory to each other, he acquainted the people that they were at liberty to choose which they liked best. In the time of the civil commotions, when Taunton became the seat of war, he spent a year or two at St. Alban's, in Hertfordshire, and preached in the abbey church there; but some time after the famous siege was raised, he returned to his charge, with two or three other ministers who had accompanied him in his absence. His preaching was plain, profitable, and successful. He was eminent for his meekness and prudence, and kept out of Taunton those divisions that did so much mischief in other places. In 1654 he was, by ordinance of parliament, one of the assistants to the commissioners for ejecting scandalous, ignorant, and insufficient ministers and schoolmasters. By the act of uniformity he was deprived of his living; but after he was silenced, convinced that it was his duty to continue his ministry, he took care to preach at those times when he might be least exposed; but notwithstanding his caution, he was apprehended for preaching, and imprisoned for several years. After he obtained his liberty, he became the first pastor of the congregation at Paul's Meeting, in Paul Street, in this town, sometime between 1672 and 1677. He died June 12th, 1681, aged seventy-nine, and was buried in the chancel of St. Mary's Church. His works were, "An Exposition and Notes on the seventeenth chapter of John," folio; "The Christian's character epitomised, a sermon on Psalm xci., v. 16." "A sermon at the funeral of Mr. Joseph Allein, and an account of his life;" "A sermon

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at the funeral of Lady Farewell;" and "A thanksgiving sermon, on the 11th of May." He had, during his incumbency, two very pious and zealous assistants, *viz.*—

1. *Tristram Welman*, who was brother to Edmund Welman, Esq., of Ilminster, and of the Rev. Thomas Welman, vicar of Luppitt, near Honiton, who was preaching in St. James's church on the very day the siege of Taunton was raised by the parliamentary army, in 1645, he was a pious and learned divine, and nephew of Mr. Simon Welman, of Taunton, the ancestor of the respectable family of Welman, of Poundisford Park, and of Isaiae Welman, of Upeott House, near Bishop's-Hull, the son of Simon Welman, and who first occupied the mansion at Poundisford. Tristram was equally eminent with his brother Thomas for his talents, benevolence, and piety. He preceded the Rev. Joseph Allein as assistant to the Rev. George Newton; was married, and appears to have died somewhat suddenly in 1650. His uncle, Simon Welman, with his family, then living at Taunton, were regular attendants at St. Mary's church, where most of his children were baptized, married, and buried, and he himself was interred here the 14th of October, 1670.

2. *Joseph Allein*. He was born at Devizes, in Wiltshire, and was educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. In 1655, he became assistant to Mr. Newton. He was a faithful and zealous minister, diligent in preaching and catechising in the church, and visiting "from house to house," testifying to all the "glorious Gospel of the blessed God." After a life of suffering for conscience' sake, he died at the early age of thirty-five years, and was buried within the communion rails at St. Mary's Church.

Emanuel Sharpe, April, 1663.

The father of this gentleman dying in possession of the rectory of Badalton, left him the advowson, of which he was deprived till the Restoration, and his family, consisting of a wife and five children, were forced to spin for a livelihood. During the Cromwell usurpation he wandered up and down Devonshire, teaching school at Dipford, Ugbrook, and Dartmouth. A great man offered him preferment if he would give up his principles, but he refused it on such terms. He retired at last to Marldon, which is a chapelry belonging to the vicarage of Paington, where he found quiet and support until the Restoration, when he not only enjoyed Badalton, but obtained this vicarage. He died 1679, and was buried in the chancel of the church. Walker says he was a learned man, of a sober and very exemplary conversation.

William Cross, B.D., Feb., 1679. Buried in Nov., 1683.

Walter Harte, M. A., Nov., 1683.

He was also a Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford, prebendary of Wells, and canon of Bristol. Refusing to take the oaths at the revolution, he lost all his preferments; and retiring to Kentbury, in Berkshire, he remained there till his death, February 10th, 1736, at the great age of ninety-five. He was regarded as a principal pillar of the nonjuring cause. It is a remarkable circumstance, and deserving of being perpetuated, as conferring equal honour on all the parties, that the three successors of Bishop Ken, the great friend of Mr. Harte,—Kidder, Hooper,

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and Wynn, all contrived that he should receive the profits of his prebend of Wells, so long as he lived.

There are two engraved portraits of Mr. Harte, the first when he was in his thirty-ninth year, 1685, engraved by Hibbart, after Zelman; and the other, inscribed "MACARIUS," a small head-piece, in his son's book, called "The Amaranth."

Richard Doble, 1690. It is said the parish made him uneasy and he resigned, 1695.

Nathaniel Markwick, Oct., 1695. Resigned, 1703. It is stated that the conduct of his curate led to his resignation.

He was author of two volumes of tracts on the Seventy Weeks of Daniel, the Apocalyptic Visions, &c. He was esteemed a man of extraordinary piety, and is said to have had no other motive for resigning his vicarage than his inability to effect the spiritual improvement of his parishioners to the extent of his wishes.

Thomas Gale, April, 1703. Buried, October, 1727.

John Boswell, A.M., October, 1727.

This gentleman was descended from the family of the Boswells, in Gloucestershire, and was born at Dorchester, January 23rd, 1698. He was educated at Abbey-Milton school, in Dorsetshire, under the Rev. George Marsh; was entered of Balliol College, Oxford, and a commoner in the same house. He did not take his bachelor's degree till 1720, being called away from college to be tutor to Lord Kinnaird. He took his master's degree at St. John's College, Cambridge; was ordained deacon by Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford, in Christ-Church, Oxford, and priest, at Wells, by Dr. Hooper, Bishop of Bath and Wells. He was presented to the living of St. Mary Magdalene, by Henry Portman, Esq., in October, 1727. His other preferment was a prebend in the cathedral church of Wells. He died in June, 1756, aged fifty-eight.—In the year 1730, he published a sermon on Psalm xvi. 7, preached on the anniversary of King Charles II.'s Restoration. In 1738, there appeared from his pen the first part and first volume of "A Method of Study, or an Useful Library;" containing short directions, and a catalogue of books, for the study of several valuable parts of learning, namely, geography, chronology, history, classical learning, natural philosophy, painting, architecture, and heraldry. The author professes that his view, in this work, was to assist poor clergymen in their studies, and to induce young gentlemen to look into books. The plan he pursued, was to point out the chief particulars necessary to be known in several useful parts of learning, and to prescribe a *method* for acquiring them. To this end he recommends such books as treat of them, lays down the order in which they should be read, attempts a character of each, and points out their peculiar excellencies. In 1743 Mr. Boswell gave to the public the second part and second volume of his "Method of Study." The study of divinity is the subject of this volume; and the particular topics discussed are the rise of the Hebrew tongue, the duties of the ministerial functions, natural and revealed religion: the chapter on the last head includes a discourse on the heathen oracles, and miracles, and some remarks on Mr. Sale's "Strictures" on Dr. Prideaux's "Life of Mahomet;" and it is followed by a dissertation on the resemblance between the sacred and profane account of things. Mr. Boswell designed a third volume, on the reading of the

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Scriptures, and on the doctrine and constitution of the Church of England, with a dissertation on the Assyrian empire; but never published it. This work shows the author's learning; but the utility of it is now, in a great measure, superseded by the progress of knowledge, and the publication, since its appearance, of many treatises on the different parts of science, much superior to those which it recommends. Mr. Boswell had the reputation of being a good scholar, and excelled in a proper and graceful pronunciation in the pulpit and the desk.

William Chafin, Nov., 1756. Resigned, June, 1803.

Francis Hunt Clapp, July, 1803. Died, Oct. 19th, 1818, and was buried within the communion rails on the north side.

He was six years curate and sixteen vicar. The vicarage was augmented during his incumbency. He was the youngest son of Robert Clapp, Esq., of Salecombe, in the county of Devon; the family resided many years on their own property at Salecombe. The original name of the family was Clappa, and dates its descent from Osgod Clappa, master of the horse of Edward the Confessor. Robert Clapp, father of the late vicar, married Mary, daughter of George Hunt, Esq., of Park, in the county of Devon, who on her mother's side was descended from the family of Wyk, or Weeks, in Devonshire, who possessed estates granted to their ancestors by William the Conqueror, one of which, called "Tawmill," still remains in the family. The Rev. Francis Hunt Clapp married Sarah, daughter of John Hippesley Brice, Esq., of Shepton-Mallet, and granddaughter of Roger Hoare, Esq., for many years clerk of the castle in Taunton, by whom he had one daughter; he was survived four years by his only brother, George Hunt Clapp, Esq., of Park, Devonshire, barrister-at-law.

Henry Bower, A.M., Queen's College, Oxford, chaplain to the Earl of Roseberry, April, 1819. Died Jan. 21st, 1840. He was also rector of Orchard-Portman and Staple-Fitzpaine.

James Cottle, A.M., LL.D., May 20th, 1840, formerly of St. Catherine's Hall, Cambridge, chaplain to the Right Honourable Lord Ashburton, and late incumbent of Tamton St. James.

There are no mural Monuments or brasses in St. Mary's church deserving any particular notice. We give a few of the inscriptions. The oldest is a table monument in the chancel, with several coats of arms, in memory of Thomas More, of Taunton, a descendant of More, of Bagborough, to whom Henry the Eighth granted the priory; on it there is the following inscription:—

Thomas More, of the Priory of Taunton, esquier, here lying, departed this life the 28th day of March, anno d'ni 1576, and had two wifes; by the first he left lying Robert, Gessey, Francis, Johan; by the second Jesper and Florence, and blest them all.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

Here under lye the body of Frannees, the wyffe of William Lechland, of Tanton, gentleman, the said Frannees was the daughter of Henrye Cornishe, of Greenwiche, Esquyre, by Margarete his wyffe, sister too Sir John Younge of Bristol, Knight, the said Henrye Cornishe being godsonne to King Henrye the eight; was placeed by him Captaine of the Castle of Jersey, and their they booth liued eleven years, after which beinge called home, they liued and dyed here.

The said Frannees after a longe saekness, wherin she was a paterne of patience as she was of vertues in her liffe, deceaseth the 13 day of Marche, anno do: 1631, to whom her said husban, after forty and nyne yeaeres and sixe monthes liuinge with her in maryage, hath geuen this laste righte a grave and this stone.

Her age was: 76.

This Tablet
is erected by
The Rev. J. COTTLE, M.A. LL.D.
Vicar of this Parish,
To perpetuate the blessed Memory
of
The Rev. JOSEPH ALLEIN,
Formerly Minister of this Church,
Died A. D. 1668.
" The Memory of the Just is blessed."
Hic iacet dominus Josephus Alleine,
Holocaustum, Tauntonenses, et Deo et vobis.

Sacred to the Memory of
Major-General ROBERT DOUGLAS,
Who died June 7th, 1798, Aged 54,
Sincerely regretted by all his Relatives & Friends.
After serving his Country Forty Years
In all quarters of the Globe,
He fell a Victim to the fatal effects of Climate.
His remains lie interred near this Spot.
Also to the Memory of his Son, JOHN DOUGLAS,
Captain in the 54th Regt. of Foot,
Who died of the Yellow Fever, at St. Kitt's, July 11th, 1796,
In the 22d Year of his Age.
This tribute of gratitude is erected by her
Who lives to deplore the loss
Of the best of Husbands
And a beloved Son.

Sacred to the Memory of the
Rev. FRANCIS HUNT CLAPP,
Vicar of Taunton Saint Mary Magdalene,
Who departed this life
October 19th, 1818, Aged 59 Years.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

Within a Vault in the adjoining Church-yard,
On the east side, are deposited the mortal Remains
Of the Rev. THOMAS COOKES, Rector of Notgrove,
And late of Barbourne House, in the County of Worcester.
He departed this life in the 74th Year of his age,
On the first of December, 1809
Those of the present generation who recollect him while living,
Will, in the remembrance of his many benevolent actions,
Feel for the loss that has been sustained by the poor
And the distressed ;
Who invariably recognised in him their unaffected Friend
And disinterested Patron.
And may those who are yet unborn,
And to whom the virtues of the dear Object
Whom we here commemorate were unknown,
Reap from the perusal of this tablet
The only advantage of the comfortable and most consoling truth,
That a Life,
Which was spent in charitable and virtuous actions,
Was at length, in the fulness of years,
Closed by a Death
Full of Hope and pious Resignation.

Sacred to the Memory
Of the Reverend MATTHEW WARREN,
A most venerable Divine ;
Learned without pride,
Pious without Ostentation, Prudent without Subtilty,
Facetious without rudeness,
Grave without austerity, Zealous without Fanaticism ;
Who, descended from the ancient Earls of Warren,
Embraced with a most cordial affection
His friends, his neighbours, and the whole Church of Christ.
He was of a graceful aspect,
Of a polite and gentle disposition, and of the sweetest manners.
Elegance, Candour, and Modesty,
Ran through his Discourses.
Born at Otterford in the County of Devon,
Educated at Oxford.
Taunton was a long time the Field of his Labours,
Where he was Pastor of a Presbyterian Congregation.
He also instructed
Many young Men in Piety and sacred Learning ;
Which double offices
He discharged faithfully, diligently, soberly,
Peaceably, and with much praise,
Until the 14th day of June, 1706,
When God called him to his heavenly rest.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

ELIZABETH and HANNAH GARDNER,
Daughters of John Gardner, Minister of the Gospel, Bath.

Interred together, August 18th, 1665.

Here lie two plants twisted by death in one,
When that was dead could this survive alone?
They were heav'n ripe, and therefore gone, we find
Ripe fruit fall off' while raw doth stick behind.
They are not lost, but in those joys remain,
Where friends may see and joy in them again.

(Their age)

1. Here Learn to D^He betth Mes Least happiLLle,
2. Ere yee begln to LIVe ye CoMe to Dye.

Sacred to the Memory of
ANN,

Third Daughter of Robert Ord,
Late Lord Chief Baron of Scotland,
By Mary, eldest daughter of Sir John Darnell, Knt.
And Wife of ANGUS MACDONALD, M.D.,

Of this Place.

In whom was combined
With the utmost Suavity of Manners,
Piety without Bigotry,
Good Sense without Affectation.
Endeared to all who knew her,
She was taken from this World
The 16th of October, 1801, aged 54 Years.

This humble Tribute to her Memory
Is erected by her Affectionate Husband.

Also in Commemoration of
KENNETH MACKENZIE,
Of Dolphinton, in Scotland, Advocate ;
A Young Man
Endeared by his amiable Qualities
And public Virtues to all who knew him.
He departed this life at the House
Of his Uncle, DR. MACDONALD,
The 23d of November, 1803, Aged 28 Years.

(ON A BRASS PLATE.)

Here Christopher Saunders daughter sleeps under this marble stone,
Whose Christian lyfe and godly end to God and world is known.
She Elenor by name was call'd, and eke was Lewis Pope's Wyfe
With whome in all humility and love she led her Lyfe.
Amidst the bitter panges of death at no tyme did she cease,
To parents and to husband both bequeathing love and peace ;
And strengthened she above all strength did suffer paines with joye,
Embracinge Christ, bid world adieu, but kept her unborne boy.

Obit 12 Decemb. 1595.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

SIMON SAUNDERS, Gentleman,
Of Taunton, who deceased the first of Maye, anno Domini 1591.

Vivit post funere virtus.

Thy corpse in grave enclosed,
Cannot thy deeds commend :
Thy hundred pound by will disposed,
Shall to the worlde's end.
Thou, living, cladst the naked back,
Thou, dying, didst provide ;
For ever to supply this lack,
At thy appointed tyde.
God grant that this thy bounty rare
May good disposers find :
Not slothful to perform this eare
According to thy mind.

ELIZABETH,

The wife of SIMON SAUNDERS, who departed this life the 5th Day
of July, 1735, aged 37 Years.

Also CHARLES STUBBS,
Who departed this life the 1st Day of April, 1769, aged 52 Years.

Bless'd be the Lord for all, my Husband dear,
Bless'd be thy Memory for thy Love sincere ;
With Patience, Mildness, Charity possest,
For every Goodness by thy friends caress'd.
When all thy Virtues to my mind I call,
I cannot but lament thy sudden fall ;
Man's life is measured by his works, not days,
And life Immortal crowns all Mortal Praise.

Here under lyeth buried the body of
RICHARD HUISH, Esq.

Borne in Taunton, and aneiently descended of the familie of the Huyshes of Denyford in the Countie of Somerset. He founded the Hospital in Mawdelyn Lane in Taunton for thirteeene poor men, begunne by himselfe, in his live tyme, and finished by his executors after his death ; and, (for relief of the said poore men) he gave by his last will one hundred and three pounds by the yeare for ever ; yssuing out of certaine howses and tenements in the Black Fryars, London, and also by his sayd will, he gave one hundred pounds a yeare for ever out of the sayd tenements for the maintenance of fyve schollars of his name of Huysh and kindred at one or both of the universitys of Oxford or Cambridge, and dyed in the true faythe of Christ Jesus, xxiii. day of February, anno Domini 1615.

Orate pro anima JOHANNIS TOOSE, Mercatoris, Tantonie, qui obiit 19 die
mensis Aprilis, anno Salutis, 1502, eujus anime proprieetur Deus, Amen.

This inscription was on the first stone in the middle aisle, going from the belfry, and was the oldest in the church, except some few partly covered by the pews.

THE CHURCH OF ST MARY MAGDALENE

H. S. I.

Vir Reverendus JOHANNES BOSWELL, A.M., probendarius Wellensis et
hujus ecclesiae vicarius; quem pastorem attente sedulum probeque fidelem deflens
parochiani, filium pientissimum et defensorem eximum ecclesia luget Anglicana,
nec non scriptorem apprime elegantem, summeque literatum. Obiit Anno Salutis
1756, AEtatis 58.

To the Memory of Mr. EDWARD CLARK,
Master of Arts, late the godly learned pastor of this church, who died Dec. 31st, and
ANN, his wife, who died 17th of the same month, 1630.

Not that they need a monument to keep
Theyr names from mould'ring while theyr bodies sleepe,
Wrapt up in dark oblivion; not that they
Need trust to statues, pillars, poesy,
Theyr dead memorial from the dust to raise,
As if theyr persons had outlived theyr praise;
Some friends erecting this, have signified
Theyr love expired not with them when they dyed.

GEORGE ATWOOD, B. D.
Archdeacon of Taunton, died 15 Dec. A. D. 1752, AEtat. 68.

MARY,
The wife of GEORGE Atwood, B. D., Archdeacon of Taunton,
died January 29th, A. D. 1733, AEtat. 41.

EMANUEL SHARP,
Who died the 20th of January, 1678, after he had been Vicar of this town 16 Years,
aged 70 Years.

ELIZABETH,
His wife, who died the 19th of March, 1689.

MARGARITE,
His eldest daughter, who died the 14th of June, 1684.

Depositum
BERNARDI SMITH,
Hujusce Oppidi bis
Praetoris, Qui obiit
XXI Die Mensis
Augusti, Anno Domini,
MDCXCVI,
Et AEtatis sue
Quinquagesimo
Secundo, hic
Requiescit in Spe
Beatae resurrectionis.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

MAURICE HAMMOND,

Of this towne, woollen-draper, who departed this life the 14th day of December,
anno domini 1667.

Here lies, ye friends, behold it and condole,
A body worne out by an active soul ;
The sheath cut thorough by too keen a blade,
Which heaven hath wrapt up till a new be made.

WILLIAM MURRAY,

Of Hydwood, in the County of Annandale, North Britain, who departed this life
the 10th Day of April, 1719, aged 28 years.

Like to a spreading rose in undue time,
Pluckt by the hand of death when in his prime,
So was this youth, whose friends do sadly mourn,
He cannot unto them again return.

But Oh ! where should spirits be but above,
Eternally to praise the God of love ?

Also JAMES MURRAY,

The brother of the above-said William Murray, who departed this life the 29th day
of April, 1756, aged 58 years.

THOMAS NEWMAN, N. P.

Who died the 27th Day of August, 1727, aged 69 years.

ELIZABETH,

The wife of Thomas Newman, N. P. of Hull-Bishops, who died the 15th Day of
August, 1715.

Also ELIZABETH,

The daughter of the said Thomas Newman, who died the 19th of March, 1722.

Move not this stone
For any one ;
For 'tis our request
To be at rest,
'Till the great Day
We must away
Together go
To bliss or woe.

Here MARGARET CARVIN'S reliques lye,
Whose aged soul Christ home did take,
To reigne with him : lo ! all must dye,
And to their final judgment wake.
Reader, prepare, for thus must thou
To death's impartial sceptre bow.

Obiit xix die Feb. anno Domini 1679, AEtatis suæ 84.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

MARY,

Second wife of George Newton, Pastor of the church in this place; was born at St. Alban's, in the county of Hertford, and died in this town December 31st, 1645.

Were there no graves in Alban's? Could not hee
That gave thee ayre, spare earth to cover thee?
Has she that first possest thy husband's bed,
Possest thy grave where thou wast born and bred,
And forced thee down to this remoter place,
To seek out her's? A very equal case;
Thy town to her, to thee her's, burial gave,
And thus you two did but exchange a grave.

Hic quoque jacet corpus

GEORGII NEWTON,

Artis Magistri, qui obiit 12 Junii, 1681, anno ætatis 79, postquam officium evangeliae in hoc oppido per 50 annos fideliter præstiterat.

Non fietis mæstam lachrymis conspergite tumbam,
Pastoris vestri nam tegit ossa pii.
Vestra salutifero planxit peccata flagello,
Delicti sensu corda gravata levans.
Absolvit pensum, sancta et mercede recepta;
Nunc cæli regno, ut stella corusca, mictat.

MOSES COTTLE,

Who died 15th of November, 1789, aged 35 years.

Didst thou know him, reader?

If thou didst not,

Know this;

He was a tender husband,
A social friend, and an honest man.

Sacred to the blessed Memory of
ROBERT GRAY, Esq.

Taunton bore him, London bred him,
Piety train'd him, virtue led him;
Earth enrich'd him, heaven carest him,
Taunton blest him, London blest him;
This thankful town, that mindful city,
Share his piety and his pity.
What he gave, and how he gave it,
Ask the poor, and you shall have it.
Gentle reader, Heaven may strike
Thy tender heart to do the like;
And now thy eyes have read the story,
Give him the praise and Heaven the glory.

Ætatis sue 65, anno Domini 1635.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

Infra quiescit corpus GULIELMI GILL, de Tonoduno, mercatore, qui summa cum laude ultimo munere praetorio in prima societate municipali hujus oppidi perfunctus est, et mortem obiit decimo septimo die Aprilis, anno Domini 1683, annoq; etatis suae sexagesimo nono.

Infra etiam jacet corpus JOHANNIS GILL, de hoc oppido, generosi, filii prefati Gulielmi Gill, qui mortem obiit undevicesimo die Februarii, anno Domini 1688, annoque etatis 42.

(*That is,*)

Underneath resteth the body of William Gill, of Taunton, merchant, who was the last mayor of this borough under the first charter, and discharged the office with the greatest applause. He died the 17th day of April, 1683, in the 69th year of his age.

Also underneath lieth the body of John Gill, of this town, gentleman, son of the above-said William Gill, who died the 19th day of February, 1688, in the 42nd year of his age.

Thy Will Be Done.

Sacred to the Memory of MARY, the beloved wife of
John Norris, Esq., of Thorcombe, in this County,

And Daughter of William Grant, Esq.,

Late of the Honourable East India Company's Civil Service.

This Monnment is erected by her Bereaved Husband,

As a Sincere though faint Testimony

Of the strong love and affection He bore her,

And as a Just though Inadequate Tribute

To the Mild Amenity of Disposition.

And unaffected Goodness of Heart,

Which, as Wife, Daughter, and Friend, Endeared her to all.

By those who shared her Intimacy, and best knew her Virtues,

Her premature loss is deeply mourned,

And will be long and severely felt.

She died on the 24th day of April, 1836, in the 39th year of her age,
And her Remains lie Interred under the south-east corner of the Railing of the
Communion Table of this Church.

Sacred to the Memory of
Sir ROBERT SEPPINGS, F.R.S.,

Surveyor of the Royal Navy,

Who died at Taunton, April 1840,

Aged 72 Years,

After Serving His Country Fifty Years.

“To His Abilities and Exertions

This Country is Mainly Indebted for its Most
Valuable Improvements in

Naval Architecture,

Which will confer a lasting Benefit on the
British Nation.”

From the Report of the Committee of Finance, House of Commons, 30th April, 1840.]

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

RICHARD BICKNELL,

Clothier, of this town, who died June 20th, 1660.

Man is like a thing of nought ;

His time passeth away like a shadow.

Sacred to the Memory
of

CHARLOTTE, the Beloved Wife of

Sir Robert Seppings,

Late Chief Surveyor of His Majesty's Navy :

She departed this Life

The 23rd November, 1834,

Aged 62 Years.

Her life was Guided by Truth.

To the Memory of

JOHN ONEBY BLISS, R.N.,

Youngest Son of the late Reverend Phillip Bliss, M.A.,

Rector of Frampton Cotterell, and of Doddington, in the County of Gloster.

He sailed as Lieutenant of His Majesty's sloop of war, Acorn,

And was lost, together with the whole ship's Company,

In a Hurricane, between Bermuda and Halifax,

April 15th, 1828, Aged 28.

This Monument is Erected by his Mother, Brother, and Sister,

A Testimony of His Exemplary Worth and of their Sincere Affection.

ANNE BLISS,

Mother of the above John Oneby Bliss,

Died the 11th of January, 1835, Aged 73,

And was Buried near this Spot.

In a Vault Underneath are Deposited the Remains of

CHARLES POOLE, Esquire,

Of this Town,

Who died Oct. 3rd, 1815.

And of REBECCA, his Wife,

Who was taken from her Family after a Protracted Illness,

July 26th, 1840.

Also, Three Sons

Of the above Charles and Rebecca Poole ;

GEORGE, who died in Infancy,

JOHN, who died August 27th, 1817,

And CHARLES, March 9th, 1830.

This Tablet is Erected

As a Tribute of Affection

To her Beloved Relatives,

By their only Surviving Child

And Sister, Mary Liddon.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

In the Adjoining Church Yard,

The Mortal Remains of

ELIZABETH,

The Beloved Wife of John Pinchard, Esq.,

Of this Place, and of Stockton, Wilts,

Await the Resurrection of the Just.

Ob. VIII Dec. MDCCCXXXV., AET. LXVII.

“ If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”—1 Thess. iv. 14.

Also of the said

JOHN PINCHARD,

Who, on the 25th day of April, 1842,

In the 80th year of his Age,

Entered into rest.

“ I am the Resurrection and the life.”—John ii. 25.

Sacred to the Memory of

WILLIAM BLUNDELL, Esq.,

Late of the Bengal Artillery,

Who departed this life at Taunton,

On the 6th day of March, 1838, Aged 86.

This Monument is Erected

By his Surviving Children, in Testimony of their late Respect and Gratitude towards
A Devoted and Affectionate Parent.

Also,

MARY ANN,

His wife, who died at the same Place, on the 14th day of December, 1804, Aged 36.

On a brass plate in the north transept is the following:—

In a Vault underneath are deposited

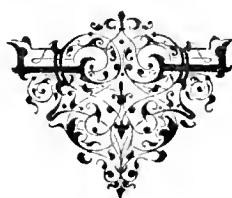
The Remains of

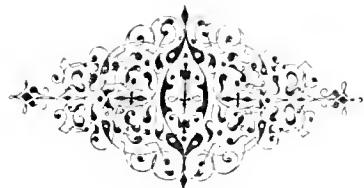
HENRY BOWER, M.A.

Born the 28th July, 1775,

Died 21st Jan. 1840,

Vicar of this Parish 20 Years.

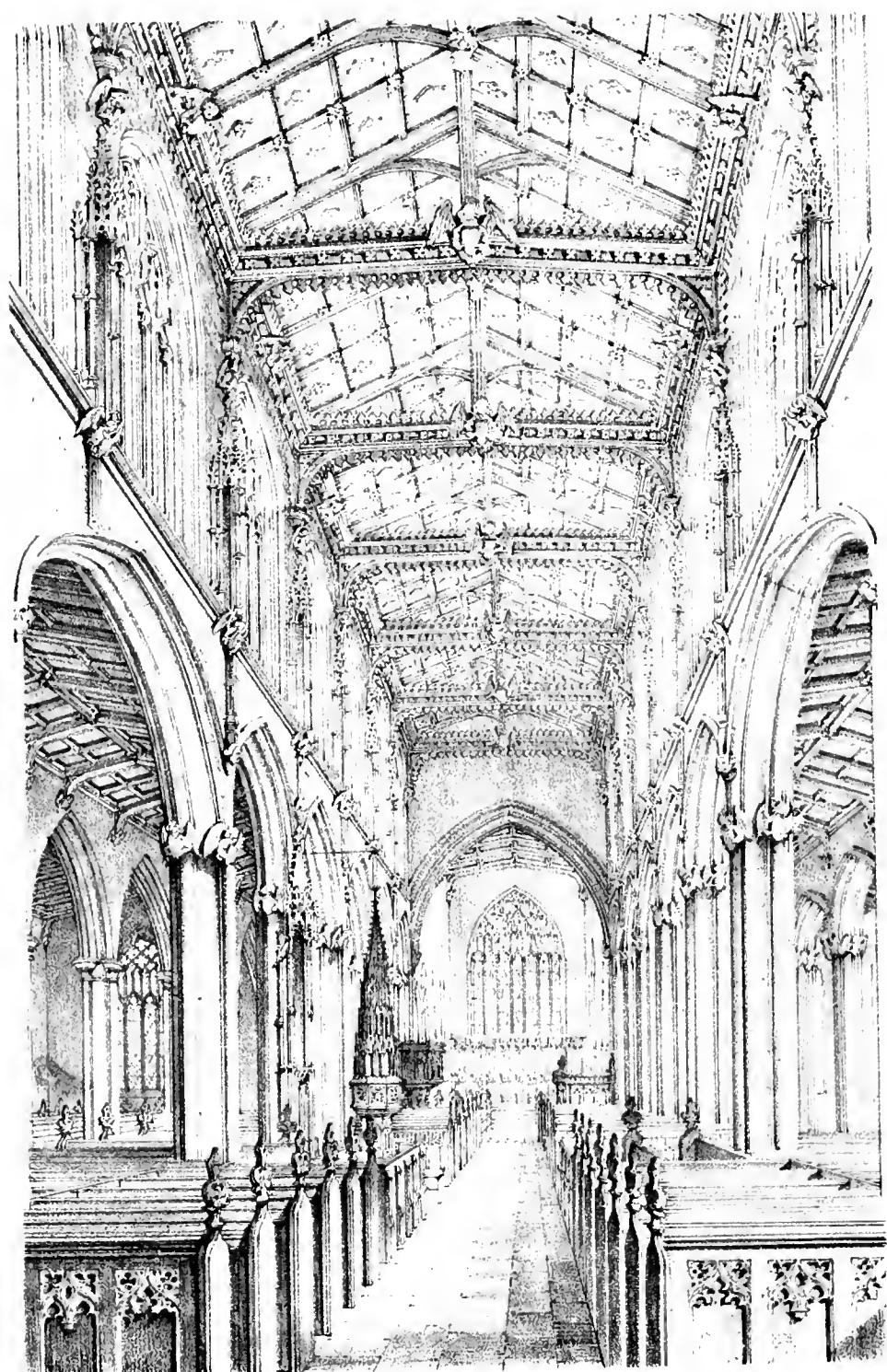




istorical notices
of
the church of St. Mary Magdalene,
Aunton, Somerset.







istorical notices of
he hurch of t. ary agdalene,

aunton.

g eorge ave.



AUNTON has ever been a principal town in Somerset, and has been called, by Camden, "one of the eyes of the county." It is situated in the centre of the luxuriant and beautiful valley called Taunton Dean,^(a) and has three churches—St. James's, St. Mary Magdalene's, and Trinity, the latter erected in the year 1842. It is to the church dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene that we are about to call the attention of the reader. This sacred and magnificent structure is situated nearly in the centre of the town, at the end of Hammet Street,^(b) and stands opposite a fine, open parade; from which, with its splendid tower, it is seen to good effect, and forms an object of universal admiration. The interior is not less interesting and striking than the exterior, and perhaps, as a whole, it is one of the finest specimens of Gothic architecture in the west of England; it exhibits, notwithstanding the different styles that have been introduced as alterations have taken place and additions been made, so much of uniformity

^(a) *Taunton Dean*, that is, *the Vale of Taunton*. The Saxon word *den* was added to the names of places to signify their being situated in valleys or woods; the word *den* means both a valley and a woody place. From the high conceit of the inhabitants of its pre-eminence above other places has arisen the boastful proverb, "Where should I be born but in Taunton Dean?" Fuller personifies it as the "king's summer parlour;" and a late writer draws an inference in its favour from the Taunton men never denying the place of their birth, nor using general terms, like the Yorkshiremen, who say, "they were born in the north."

^(b) This street was called after Sir Benjamin Hammet, who built it in 1788. The church previous to this was very much concealed from public view, the entrance to it being through a narrow lane.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

and beauty as to fill with surprise and admiration the minds of all who behold it. And we may add that, from our personal observation of the various churches both in this and other counties, the church of St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton, is as fine an ecclesiastical structure of its class as we ever witnessed. The circumstances of its history and the exact date of its first erection have not been precisely ascertained. Its origin is buried in obscurity; this is, however, the case with most of our country churches. The only clue that sometimes leads to the discovery of the date of a church is frequently found in the old foundations, upon which new structures have arisen; and this remark applies to the church now under consideration. Often, in the remains of an old arch and its piers, to which new work has been added—as at Corfe church, near Taunton—the old Anglo-Norman semi-circular arch and its massive pillars tell pretty nearly the date of its first erection, *viz.*, about 1150, as that style scarcely survived the twelfth century. Occasionally the date may be found in a single and almost hidden pier, as at the church of Pitminster, where, in the remains of a pier or pilaster now sustaining the south end of the western arch, and from whose capital it springs, is given the date of the latter part of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, while the general style of the church is that of the fifteenth, and some of it much later. We may also recognise the period of an original erection from a single old blocked-up window, as at Norton-Fitzwarren church, where we find a window of the early English style; and this, accompanied with the massive octagonal piers, and an ornamented corbel, gives the date of the thirteenth, while nearly all the rest of the windows carry us forward to the fifteenth century; if we were to judge of the age of the church by these windows, we should be led into error. The old window is of the twelfth or thirteenth century, and no doubt gives the proper age of the church. We cannot therefore always affix the date with chronological exactness to the erection of a building by its windows. How many are there, especially in the county of Somerset, which have most of, if not all, the windows of the perpendicular style of the fifteenth century, while other parts of the church are known to be of the twelfth or thirteenth, being of a style which prevailed only in one of these periods! We now propose giving our views and opinions, together with what information we have been able to obtain, respecting the church of St. Mary Magdalene; our statements may not always be confirmed by documentary evidence, yet if they are rendered more than probable by that which is circumstantial, we think this is as much as can be expected upon a subject involved in so much mystery as the origin of this church. Could we have examined the documents at the Priory at the time of its

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

dissolution, and which then, perhaps, were scattered or destroyed, no doubt we should have been relieved from many difficulties in discharging the task before us.^(a) We have been disappointed, too, in not finding any parish records, from which we had hoped to have derived assistance; but these have been so badly kept, or entirely lost, that we have gained little or no help from them.^(b)

The chief sources from which we have derived our information are the following:—

First—From a few well-authenticated ancient documents.

Secondly—From the various styles which have been introduced as new works have arisen, or alterations taken place; these show a different age, and therefore give another date; and although it is not easy to say with exactness when one style terminated and the other commenced—for the transition was very gradual—yet there was a period in each when the particular style only at the time of the alteration prevailed, and when it became so obvious that no one could mistake its distinctive features. For instance, the capitals of the piers of the north and south transepts, or chantries, are very different from the necks of the capitals of the south piers; they are simple cones, whilst those of the north are concave, thus showing that both were not erected at one and the same time.^(c)

Thirdly—From observations made during the recent alterations, and especially while the earth underneath the floor was being removed; much older foundations were then discovered than the works which had been

(a) Why libraries should have been so recklessly destroyed at the Reformation does seem astonishing. At Malmesbury, which possessed some of the finest manuscripts in the kingdom, broken windows were actually patched with portions of them; and, for many years after the dissolution, bakers had not consumed the stores which they had accumulated for heating their ovens. Leland, who saw the priory at Taunton just before its dissolution, takes notice of the library, and mentions the names of some of the books he saw there. The library of Glastonbury, one of the richest in England, was probably destroyed at this time by the fanatics. What would we now give had Bale's wish been realised, that "in every shire of England there had been one solemn library for the preserving the noble works of men, godly-minded, and lively memorials of our nation."

(b) There were no registers kept in churches before 1538, when an order was issued to keep a register of all baptisms, marriages, and burials. These registers commenced in the parish of St. Mary's in the year 1552. What we more especially complain of is, the loss of most of the registers containing the churchwardens' accounts of parish meetings, expenses, &c.; only a few of which are to be found. There must have been great inattention or negligence by some parties. It is hoped they will be better preserved in future, and that this and similar publications will have the effect of stirring up the spirit of inquiry, and of inducing those who have leisure and the means to investigate parish records, and to examine bishops' registers and other documents calculated to throw light upon the history of our churches and the manuscripts of the middle ages.

(c) The necks of the capitals of the piers of the north transept, or chantry chapel, are similar to those of the north aisle, and this shows that this transept and the aisle were erected at the same time, but after the church had been built; whereas the south transept was erected with the church, and hence the difference in the necks of the capitals of the piers.

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raised upon them. To these circumstances we paid the most minute attention, and thereby gained more information than we had anticipated, and from which we have been led to form a somewhat different opinion of the age of this church than that generally entertained.

The existence of a church on this site was, no doubt, much earlier than the erection of the Priory, and the completion of it, in its present form, much later than is usually supposed. It is rather singular that neither Dugdale, in his "Monasticon," nor Tanner, in his "Notitia," gives the least information, nor refers to any document, connected with the Priory or the first erection of St. Mary's. Neither does Camden, or Gough, in the "Britannia," take any notice of it. "And it is rather singular," says Mr. Britton, in his "Architectural Antiquities," that "neither Dr. Toumin, Collier, nor Savage, could obtain any document relative to the age of the tower; neither does Leland, or Camden, or Gough, furnish us with anything even like a hint to lead us to a discovery." It is no wonder, then, that the materials should be so scanty from which we have had to derive our knowledge, and if the account about to be furnished should be more satisfactory than any previously given, it will be to us a source of much gratification. In taking a general view of this structure, it appears that no church in this county has undergone more frequent or greater changes, or has received more or larger additions, since its first erection. Hence, no one date is applicable to the whole; and many must be affixed, as the several parts arose or alterations were made. In order, therefore, to give a correct idea of the building, we must go back as far as the seventh century, and it is believed there is sufficient evidence to satisfy us in coming to the conclusion that a church must have existed on the same site long previous to the Norman Conquest.

In addition to some historical circumstances connected with the town, which have led to our coming to this conclusion, we have been further strengthened in our opinion by the following considerations, *viz.*—the early introduction of Christianity into Britain; the early division of England into parishes; the state of Taunton at the latter part of the seventh century; some items in the endowment of the Priory; and the discovery of the old foundations. With regard to the *first*, *viz.*, the introduction of Christianity into this country, few who have read the best works on ecclesiastical history, will doubt that it was in or near the Apostolic age. The planting of it at Glastonbury,^(a) and

^(a) Mr. Stevens, in his continuation of Sir William Dugdale's history of abbeys and monasteries, speaks of the abbey as follows:—"Of this abbey, so much celebrated throughout the *Christian* world, too much cannot be said, being a subject for whole volumes, as we see some have been compiled of other churches, inferior to this in antiquity and many other particulars. This was

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the gradual rise of that magnificent establishment, must have had a great and extensive influence upon the surrounding country, but especially upon the towns and villages near it; and as the Romans had stations, if not in, yet around Taunton,^(a) it is evident that it at that time not only existed, but was a place of some importance, arising perhaps from its fertile soil and beautiful situation. Taunton, from its contiguity to the abbey at Glastonbury, would no doubt soon partake of its Christian benefits. The ministers of Christianity at that time went from place to place preaching the Gospel to all who were willing to hear it, and, when a few had believed, then, like Paul and Barnabas, they collected them into societies and established churches. It was their usual custom to begin with a city, or other important place, where they for a time located, and from which they made frequent excursions to the adjacent towns and villages, with the pious purpose of gaining converts to the true faith. We know that Taunton was a town of no small importance in the seventh century, for here was a castle, the residence of a Christian king, who held here a great council, composed of the bishops, clergy, nobles, and commons of his kingdom. It were unreasonable not to suppose that from the abbey, long previous to this, missionaries had been sent forth to establish Christianity and found churches in this town. This consideration will receive additional strength from the circumstance of the division of the county into parishes, which we are informed by Camden was made by Archbishop Honorius, about 636. Although we are aware that historians differ with regard to the time, yet it is not to be supposed

(notwithstanding the groundless cavils of some critics) one of the first places where *Christianity* may be said to have had a settlement; and though the possession was perhaps for some time interrupted by the persecutions of the Roman emperors, yet, as soon as ever the faithful began to breathe again, they again resorted to this place as peculiarly dedicated to God. It was even honoured by the British, Saxon, Danish, and Norman kings, and never ceased to have the same veneration paid to it till it fell by the hands of the sacrilegious men, to supply (among the rest) the boundless profusion of King Henry VIII., who, still assuming the name of a *Christian*, overthrew as many sacred structures as it he had been a heathen, Goth, or Vandal. But these reflections may be ungrateful to many, who cannot or will not distinguish between *sacrilege* and *reformation*, and therefore look upon the destruction of churches and other places as heroic actions, and glory in converting the noblest structures (which civilised heathens would have spared on account of their magnificence), into barns and stables, and into heaps of rubbish, as this once wonderful fabric is, at present; or else conveying away that very rubbish, that no memory may remain of such sacred piles, as has happened in many other places."

^(a) Taunton, there is reason to suppose, was not unknown to the Romans, for in the year 1666 two large earthen pitchers full of medals, and in weight eighty pounds each, were dug up with mattocks, by labourers, in ploughed fields; the one at Lydeard St. Lawrence, and the other within the adjoining parish of Stogumber. A like discovery was also made of Roman coins and other antiquities in the foundations of an old house near the Castle, in 1643; and in taking down a house in St. James's parish, Taunton, an old Roman coin was found, the size of a farthing, with the head of Vespasian. In Collinson's "History of the County of Somerset" it is said, "that a Roman road ran nearly parallel with the Fosse, from the forest of Exmoor, through Taunton, Bridgwater, and Axbridge, to Portishead, on the Bristol Channel, where it intersected Wansdike, and whence there was a trajectus to the city of Isca Silurum, now Caerleon, in the county of Monmouth."

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that this all took place at once, for no doubt it was gradual and dependent on circumstances, and must have taken a long time to make the arrangements which now exist.^(a) It is, however, probable that parishes were formed in this county as early as in any other, considering the establishment at Glastonbury, and its influence over the neighbourhood. And it is likely that such a place as Taunton then was, one of the oldest towns in the county, and so near the abbey, would be amongst the earliest to come under this division. We have, therefore, every reason to believe that the town was divided into the parishes of St. Mary and St. James, and that churches were also erected, about the close of the seventh century. The importance of the town at this period would also seem to favour this conclusion. Dr. Toulmin has justly observed, "in whatever obscurity the early period of the history of Taunton is involved, it clearly appears to have been a place of good note in the time of the Saxons, for Ina, one of the West Saxon kings, as early as the seventh century, built a castle here, nearly upon the site of the present,"^(b) not only as a place of residence, but also for the purpose of better securing the conquests^(c) which he had made in this part of Britain." It is here that this prince, whose reign throughout is "marked with fortitude tempered with moderation, and prudence heightened by religion," is said to have held the first great councils of his kingdom, by whose assistance he compiled a code of laws for the government of his subjects. In this great council we find the bishops and clergy mentioned with the nobles and commons. He says, "I, Ina, king of the West Saxons, have called my fatherhood, aldermen, and my wisest commons, with the godly men of my kingdom, to consult of great and weighty matters."^(d) It is not

(a) "The division of a diocese into rural parishes, and the foundation of churches adequate to them, cannot be ascribed to any one act, nor indeed to any one single age. The forming of parishes and the appropriation of their tithes, seldom took place until the churches had been or were about to be built to which the tithes were to be appropriated. And all those churches erected in the seventh century were, of course, of Saxon origin, and built in the Saxon style."—Burn's "Ecclesiastical Law," vol. i., p. 59

(b) Castles in that age, as well as churches, were sometimes built of wood; sometimes in haste, for present accommodation, or from the want of other materials at hand; and this will account for their speedy disappearance, time not leaving a vestige to tell the site on which they stood.

(c) "Ina, king of the West Saxons, was one of the best and most illustrious princes of the Saxon Heptarchy. The turning his arms against Gerwent, king of Wales, and obtaining a great victory, which gave him the full possession of Cornwall and Somersetshire, and made Taunton the capital of the western kingdom, where he built a castle for his residence, as well as for the defence of his western dominions. The latter part of his life and reign was spent in peace and piety; and after having worn his crown with glory thirty-nine years, the devotion of the times indued him, in 728, to make a pilgrimage with his queen to Rome; after which he shut himself up in a convent to pass the remainder of his life in devotion."—Dr. Aikin's "General Biography."

(d) Here is represented, in King Ina, the king's royal person; his fatherhood, in those ancient days, were those whom we call bishops, and therefore were termed reverend fathers: by aldermen, the nobility is meant; so honourable was the word alderman of old times, that only noblemen were

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therefore to be supposed that such a wise and pious king as he is said to have been would build a castle, not only for the defence of his kingdom, but as a residence for himself, and assemble also so great a council, not only of his nobles and commons, but of the bishops and clergy, and neglect the spiritual wants of the town in which he resided. Neither would he, we think, have called such a great council to assemble here, had there not been churches already in existence; but if this were not the case, no doubt he soon supplied the deficiency. That he was inclined to build churches, we have abundant proof in the munificent donations made by this king to the church at Glastonbury. In the year 708 he demolished all the old buildings, and re-built the abbey. One of the chapels belonging to it he garnished with gold and silver, and gave to it likewise ornaments and vessels of gold and silver; for the gold thereupon bestowed amounted to three hundred and thirty-three pounds weight, and the silver to two thousand eight hundred and thirty-five pounds, besides the precious gems embroidered in the celebrated vestments. He also, in 725, not only gave great possessions to the church at Glastonbury, but founded a larger one there, in honour of our Saviour and the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, at the east of the old church. Collinson, in his "History of Somerset," confirms our views of the subject, and says that it was at Taunton "he convened the clergy of the west to assist him in the promotion of the Christian religion; and, notwithstanding the insurrection of Ealdbryght Clito, who urged a presumptive claim to his crown and sceptre, and whom he vanquished underneath the walls of Taunton, and the seditious murmurings of some other malcontents of inferior note, he lived to see his territories in the full possession of tranquillity, and there being now no longer an occasion for walls and bulwarks, the castle of Taunton was demolished; and the king, having put the government of his kingdom into the hands of Ethelard, brother of his queen, Ethelburga, retired to a monastery at Rome, and there ended his days."

Collinson also adds, which shows still more the importance and respectability of Taunton at that time:—"Ethelard, succeeding to the throne of the West Saxons, seems to have followed the steps of his great predecessor, and to have cultivated peace, piety, and religion, in which he was assisted by his devout queen Fritheswitha, who, abandoning all her splendid possessions,

called aldermen: by the wisest commons it signified knights and burgesses; and so is the king's writ at this day—“*De discretioribus et magis sufficientibus*” by godly men is meant the convection house, for that it only consisteth of religious men: to consult of great and weighty matters; so is the king's writ at this day—“*Pro quibusdam arduis et urgentibus negotiis, nos, statum et defensionem regni nostri Angliae, et ecclesie Anglicane concerentibus*” —See Doddridge “On the Antiquity of Parliaments,” in “Hearne's Collection of Curious Discourses,” vol. i, p. 281.

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devoted herself entirely to God; and, among many other acts of religious charity, prevailed upon Ethelard to bestow the town of Taunton, then the seat of royal residence, on the church of Winchester, which had been founded by Cynegils, the first Christian king of the West Saxons.”^(a) It is unreasonable to suppose that such religious and royal personages, so zealous for the advancement of Christianity, would have made this their residence, unless there had been churches in which to worship the Most High God.

The next thing we notice, in reference to the early existence of this church, are some of the items in the original endowment of the Priory by its founder, Bishop Giffard, in 1127. It was so much improved by his successor, Henry de Blois, brother of King Stephen, that he came in for an equal share of honour with the founder of it. But the exclusive claim of William Giffard to be considered in this light was ascertained by an inquisition, taken on oath before the king’s escheators at Taunton, in the tenth year of the reign of Edward II., 1316; and by a charter of confirmation which passed in the reign of Henry II., reciting the foundation of the priory and the subsequent grants made to it, it appears that the endowment of it, when first established, consisted of *all the churches of Taunton*, with their chapels and all their appurtenances; the manor of Blaglon; the church of Kingston, with its chapels and appurtenances; the church of Bishop’s-Lydeard, the church of Anger’s-Leigh, and the church of Bishop’s-Hull, with their respective appurtenances; and that Henry de Blois, the successor of William Giffard, augmented this endowment by a grant of the church of Pitminster, with its chapels and appurtenances.”^(b) This endowment gives us the date of the churches then in Taunton, as well as Kingston, Bishop’s-Lydeard, Anger’s-Leigh, Bishop’s-Hull, and Pitminster. It is reasonable, therefore, to inquire what where the churches in Taunton that formed a part of the above endowment, except St. Mary’s and St. James’s? The town was never divided into more than two parishes, and we have never heard of more than two churches, *viz.*, one dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene and another to St. James. We think the words in the original charter, “*omnes ecclesias Tauntoniae*,” could only refer to these two; for if there were other places of worship, they could only have been chapels-of-ease to them. Neither do we think that these words include the churches and chapels in the neighbourhood, for these are distinctly mentioned by name in the charter, independently of “*omnes ecclesias Tauntoniae cum capellis*.” The chapels mentioned by Dr. Toulmin as having existed in

^(a) See Colinson, vol. iii., p. 229.

^(b) See a copy of the original endowment, Dugdale’s “Monasticon,” tom. ii., p. 83.

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Taunton, *viz.*, St. Margaret's, at the bottom of East Reach; St. Paul's, in the west part; and St. Leonard's, at the north end of the town, were built some time after the date of the above endowment, and therefore could not be included in it: *besides, not one of them was in the parish of St. Mary Magdalene.* If, then, churches were not erected at the time the priory was founded, how are we to understand the terms of the endowment? The inhabitants of this parish, moreover, must have been without a place for divine worship for nearly twelve hundred years after Christianity had been introduced into this island, and that, too, with a Christian establishment nearly as long in its neighbourhood, which appears very improbable.

We notice, lastly, the old foundations lately discovered. These were deep, and formed of flint and rubble, so cemented together as to be separated only with great difficulty. Upon these foundations another church had formerly stood, and the piers of the present north and south transepts stand upon the old foundations which once formed a part of the north and south walls of the chancel of the first erection. The foundations of the nondescript piers, supporting the present chancel arch, as well as the piers themselves, belong to a much older church than the present; these piers have been much altered, in order to suit successive buildings, and have lost much of their first massiveness, through the endeavours to make them look more modern. At present they do not seem to have the character either of one style or the other, and they no doubt belonged, with the foundations beneath them, to a much older church than the one erected in the thirteenth century, of which we shall presently speak, and formed part of a Saxon church, which, by repeated alterations, was changed into the Norman style and character. And from the old plain abacus still remaining on the north pier, and from which springs the transept arch, we should infer that the older chancel arch was low and semi-circular, having either a Saxon or Norman origin. This church, no doubt, was in existence at the time of the foundation of the priory, and is one of those alluded to in the endowment.

Thus, from the circumstance of Taunton being known and visited by the Romans—its co-existence with the early establishment of Christianity at Glastonbury—its being for a considerable time the residence of a Christian king—and its having been early in the eighth century attached to the see of Winchester, it is certainly not too much to conclude that there existed churches here in the seventh century, or before; especially when this is further supported by the collateral evidence we have furnished. Having advanced thus far, we now proceed to notice the erections and



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alterations which have taken place from the establishment of the priory to the present time.

It has been already observed, that the oldest part of the church consists of the foundations lying beneath the piers of the north and south transepts, and the columns supporting the chancel arch—the plain, square abacus, like those we often see crowning the Anglo-Saxon pier, from which springs the semi-circular arch: these are the only remains both of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman structures,—the first erected before the end of the seventh century, and, we believe, changed into the latter style sometime in the eleventh, but *previous to the founding of the Priory*.

The next portion of the church, in point of antiquity, includes the north aisles, the row of columns that divides the outer from the inner aisle, the three eastern arches over the above piers, and the eastern arch over the piers of the nave, on the north side; and also the piers of both transepts, formerly chantries, as well as the sunk, panelled parapet over the eastern part of the south aisle. All these are of a similar date; they belonged to the same church, and are the remains of a church built in the thirteenth century in the early English style, which prevailed throughout the whole of that century. We have satisfactory evidence of this erection from a letter of Bishop Branscombe, then Bishop of Exeter, the occasion of which was as follows:—the prior and the convent, with the inhabitants of the parish, had begun to rebuild their church; but, finding that they had not sufficient means to complete it, applied to the bishop for letters permissive to make collections in other parishes to enable them to finish it. The bishop grants their request, and writes a letter to his archdeacons on the subject. This letter is dated from Clist, near Exeter, the 13th of March, 1277, and addressed to the Archdeacons of Exeter and Totness, authorising them to make collections throughout the diocese, during the space of twelve months, in favour of the prior and convent of Taunton, who, he says, “have began to build their church in a style of costly magnificence, to the completion of which their means are far from being adequate.”^(a) This letter is quite conclusive as to the time when this church was being built; and the date agrees well with the style of what remains of the building. This letter bears too early a date for the style of the greater part of the building now standing, it being the florid, or perpendicular, which was not introduced until about 1375, and even at this period only a few specimens have been found,

^(a) “Qui ecclesiam suam edificare ceperunt opere sumptuoso, ad eius perfectionem prope non sufficiunt facultates.”—Bishop Branscombe’s Register, fol. 85.

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which is nearly one hundred years after the date of Bishop Branscombe's letter, so we may be pretty sure to which part it applies, and for which the collection was made. It may not, therefore, be too much to conjecture that this church was finished about 1279, which is more than half a century previous to its being endowed as a vicarage,^(a) which took place in 1308, and which, according to Dr. Toulmin, gives the time of the erection of the church, that is, according to our view, the early English church,^(b) after the foundation of the priory, which cannot be correct if we attach any importance to the date of the above letter. He further adds, "the two outer aisles, as appears from the date on the porch, were built in 1508, or perhaps one of them only, for there is a difference in the architecture. Had he been acquainted with the several styles of Gothic architecture, and the period of their introduction, he would not have fallen into such an error, but would have seen that the date of the north aisle was of the thirteenth century, while the porch would have enabled him to fix only a part of the south aisle and its porch at 1508, the perpendicular alone prevailing at that time. There is one question in connection with this church of the thirteenth century, on which we have not been able to

^(a) The following ordination respecting the vicarage was made by Walter Haselshaw, Bishop of Bath and Wells, *viz.* :—That Master Simon de Lyme, as incumbent of, and duly instituted in, the vicarage of St. Mary Magdalene, in the town of Taunton, should receive, every week throughout the year, twenty-one canonical loaves, and forty-two conventional flagons of ale, and seven loaves of bolted bread, of the same weight as the canonical loaves, and twenty-eight loaves of fine wheat flour, and seven flagons of best ale. That he should receive, every year, from the prior and convent, fifteen marks of silver, and six cart-loads of hay, and seven bushels of oats every week for his horse, and two shillings for shoeing his horse, yearly; that he should have all legacies left to him in the said parish, and such tithes and curtilages as his predecessors usually had, with the following duty, *viz.*, that he should serve, with proper assistants, the chapel of the blessed Mary Magdalene, of Taunton, and the chapels of Trendle, the Castle, and St. George's Well, in sacraments and other sacred offices, at his own expense, with this addition, that he should find a resident minister to officiate always at Trendle, for the relief of the said vicar and his successors (to whom the care of the souls of the whole parish was committed by the ordinary). The prior and convent were to find a secular resident priest for the parish of Stoke and Ruishton, and another for Staplegrove and St. James, and a third for Ille-Episcopi, at their own expense. It was further ordained, that the said vicar and all his assistants, serving the said chapels, should make an oath of trust to the said prior, their rector, at their admission, that they would, without any defalcation or reserve, restore and refund all and singular the obventions received in the aforesaid places. That, for the augmentation of the said vicarage, two quarters of wheat should be delivered out of the priory grange, or granary, to the said vicar on the feast of our Lord's nativity. The prior and convent to sustain ordinary, and their proportion of extraordinary, burdens, and find books, vestments, and other necessaries for the said chapels, at their own expense.

^(b) The church of the early English style appears to have consisted of a nave, two north aisles, and one south; and a chantry south of it, a chancel and two chantries adjoining on the north and south sides.

The nave, 33 feet long, 12 feet wide.	Chancel, 22 feet long, 20 feet wide.
North aisles, 33 „ 15 „	South aisles, 33 „ 15 „

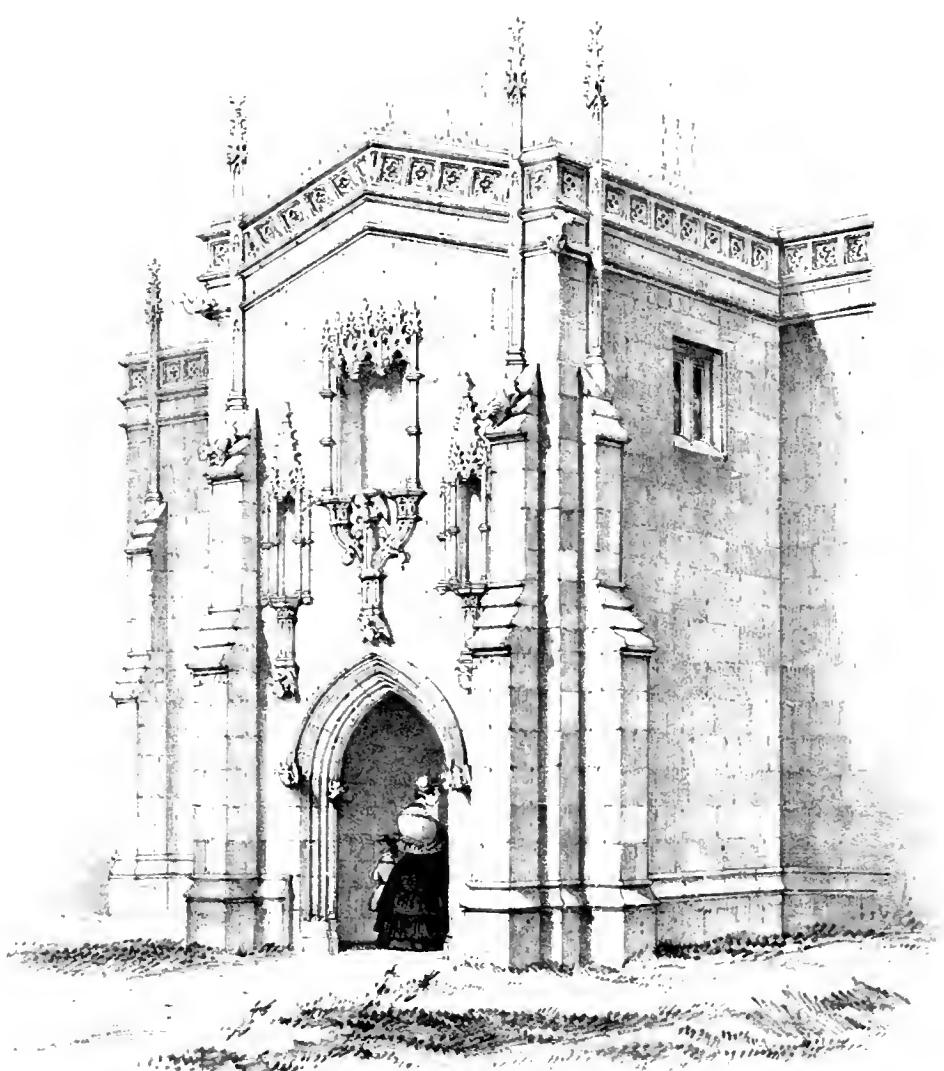
In 1292 this parish was rated as a rectory by Pope Nicholas, at 90 marks; about £135 of our present money.

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satisfy ourselves, *viz.*, whether it had a tower. The present is of a different style, and therefore of another and later age than the fabrie, as the remains show; and in addition to this, the present tower stands too far from the place where the western portion of the church originally terminated, which was at the third arch from the chaneel, and may be observed by an inspection of the three eastern arches of the north aisle and nave. If it had a tower, it was certainly not placed at the west end, for when the recent excavations were made, not the least vestige was perceptible from which we might have supposed where it stood, as the earth appeared never to have been moved; it seems probable, therefore, that the tower belonging to this church was never erected—no doubt for want of the necessary means, for we find that they could not finish the church without being obliged to apply for foreign aid; it was therefore left to those of the fifteenth century to erect the present magnifieent tower, and in addition they increased considerably the size of the church of the thirteenth, as the different styles will show. Since this enlargement varions alterations have taken place, which we shall now endeavour to trace, and, for the sake of perspicuity, we purpose dividing them into two periods—the first extending from about 1400 or 1420, the date on the south porch, and which will include the erection of the tower, the extension and elevation of the nave, the erection of the western part of the south aisle, and also the above porch, which bears the date

Mis. Dom 1408.

The second period extends from the above date to the middle of the seventeenth century; in which took place the pulling down of an old south chantry, and the reconstruction of the eastern part of the south aisle, thus making it uniform with the western part; the altering of the chaneel; the converting of the chantries into transepts; the destruction of the rood loft, and the erection of the crown gallery in its place. Under the *first* period, we have to notice the *Tower*. It does not fall within our province to give a minute description of this elegant structure: we shall, therefore, only speak of it in connection with other portions of the church. It is quite clear that it was built after the north aisles had been extended and completed, for it is made to project so far upon the west end of these aisles as to block up a portion of one of the west windows. It is equally evident that its erection took place when the nave was raised and extended, from the great elevation



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of its inner beautifully-panelled arch, which opens completely upon the nave, and, by its great height, admits all the light from its handsome western window into the body of the church. The tower itself, no doubt, took many years to complete; ^(a) it is clear, however, that the original design was never departed from, the same order prevailing through the whole. Its being built in the perpendicular style is a proof that its erection commenced after the introduction of that style, and was finished before it began to degenerate into the debased English. The tower is the best specimen of the florid, or perpendicular, and was built when this style was in its greatest perfection. This order commenced in the fourteenth century, and was continued throughout the fifteenth, and even entered into the sixteenth. It corresponds with the style of St. Michael's, Coventry, and also with that of Merton College Chapel, Oxford, and with some of the windows in the tower of Fotheringay Church, Northamptonshire, whose date is 1434.

The nave also, at this period, was extended three arches, raised almost to cathedral height, and elaborately finished with a splendid, carved, oak roof, which has lately been fully restored. Its height, with the panelled arch of the tower, gives great grandeur to the body of the church, it being high enough to admit six clerestory windows on each side, composed of four lights each. The spaces between them are filled with twelve ornamented niches, canopied, and finished with delicately-formed pilasters, having small crocketed pinnacles, and terminating in a trefoiled head. These niches are supposed to have been filled with the statues of the twelve Apostles, previous to the Reformation, but then destroyed. In the second column from the west door on the north side is a beautifully-sculptured niche, supposed to have been designed for and occupied by a statue either of the patron saint, St. Mary Magdalene, or the Virgin Mary. The font is now placed, with very good effect, opposite this niche. This extension of, or addition to, the nave is seen from the different construction of the eastern and western arches on the north side; the eastern, being the older, are more acute, partaking of the lancet; the western are all obtuse, and more resemble the Tudor. It has a double row of pillars, composed of a small cylinder surrounded by four delicate shafts, ^(b) having their capitals

^(a) It was not an unusual practice to occupy many years in such erections; for instance, the tower of St. Michael's Church, Coventry, the building of which commenced in 1373, was not finished till 1395, and was built at the sole expense of two brothers, Adam and William Batnor.

^(b) One of these small shafts on the last pier of the older part on the north side had no base to it—all the rest had—but its cylindrical shape went down to the pavement. This was to enable the Romish procession of the priesthood to pass round with more ease, it being the outer shaft of the last pier, next the western end. This, however, no one would now suspect or perceive, a new base

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ornamented with cherubic busts, their hands supporting a shield, a scroll, or some other device.

At this time, also, the western portion of the south aisle was built, and made wider than the old eastern part, which remained the same; but this new erection did not take place until some time after the tower had been finished, as may be seen by examining the west end wall, where the aisle is made to encroach upon the side of the tower, and which is quite the reverse with the north, for there the tower extends beyond the aisle, showing that it was built after the aisle, while the south goes beyond the angle of the tower, proving that that part was erected after it. The extent of this enlargement is evident in the south wall, from the different stone employed, and from the old and new work not having been toothed together. Where this alteration ended was plainly observable, both from the inside and outside of the church; from the former it is not now visible, the walls having been recently plastered; from the latter it is, however, still to be seen.

The last erection of this period appears to have been the *south porch*, which completed the design then in view, and which gave a finish to the western part of the edifice; it is of a very elegant and elaborate construction. In the front are niches for statuary. The ceiling is groined with fan tracery, and a small chamber is constructed over it.^(a) It is finished at the top with a perforated parapet, and on the angles are crocketed pinnacles. The door entering the church is square-headed, the spandrels of which are filled with sculptured figures and sacred emblems. This porch was in a very mutilated state previous to its present correct and judicious restoration. Of late years it has been used more as a receptacle for lumber than as an entrance into the church; this very censurable misappropriation will henceforth, it is hoped, be discontinued, and the porch be employed for the sacred purposes of its original construction.

Having thus noticed the chief alterations which took place between the latter part of the fourteenth century to 1508, we proceed to our *second period*, *viz.*, from that time to the middle of the seventeenth century.

And the first thing we would notice is, the reconstruction of the eastern portion of the south aisle, which was before uniform with the eastern end of the north, having a chantry adjoining the south of it, but was taken down, and the whole aisle made uniform with the western; the old materials were evidently used for this purpose, for when the wall over the piers was

having been lately put to the shaft, and an angle stone let in, like the rest; but as this stone does not join like the other angle stones to the base, the peculiarity may on a very close inspection be perceived, though the reason for this baseless shaft few would imagine.

^(a) This is called *parrise*, a small room generally over the porch, used either as the abode of a chantry priest, or as a record room or school. There is a large one at Cirencester.

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taken down to repair the roof, old cemented stone and mortar in large pieces were found filling up the middle, as rubble; the old nautilus corbels for supporting the roof had again been used, as well as the old sunken panel parapet, both of which belonged to the church of the thirteenth century. In the building of the pillars they imitated those of the western side, and made the bases and shafts very similar, but introduced a greater variety into the capitals, for although cherubie busts are made use of, they sustain different devices; instead of the simple shield, hands are introduced, with the scroll, a cross band, or wreath, and some appear to have the Vandyke collar of the age of Charles I., which, perhaps, gives very nearly the date of their erection; for had these piers been raised at one and the same time, their capitals would, no doubt, have been all alike; in the moulding of the bases, also, some difference is to be found. The windows, too, in this portion of the church are of an older date than the rest, and belonged, probably, to the former aisle; the east window is of a bold construction, large and handsome, consisting of seven lights, with a transom; indeed, the whole of the windows in the church, thirty-eight in number, are entirely new, but have been strictly copied from the old. The chancel, too, now underwent a change, both in extent and elevation; it is difficult, however, to describe what the exact alterations were, but clerestory windows were introduced for the purpose of throwing more light on the rood loft, which was converted into a gallery; these were of a modern date, and consisted of two lights each, with round heads; they have been lately taken out, and the places blocked up. The handsome window recently introduced is precisely of the same size and character as that of the dilapidated one previously removed; this window, with the chancel arch and walls, has been elevated nearly three feet by the recent alterations, which is a manifest improvement in the general appearance of the whole edifice. The two side windows in the chancel are filled with stained glass, containing sacred devices and armorial bearings.

Another change which took place was the reconstruction of the north and south chantries, converting them into regular transepts; this must have taken place after the south aisle had been finished, the south wall of the transepts projecting beyond a part of the east window of the same; the north transept extends in a similar manner over the east window of the north aisle. In effecting this alteration it appears, the pillars of the thirteenth century were retained. Chantries were abolished by an order from Government about 1538,^(a) and a great change then took place, some being

^(a) Chantries were built and endowed for the maintenance of a priest to sing masses, which were held satisfactory to redeem the soul of the founder out of purgatory: from these prayers it was called

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formed into transepts, and in these, windows were occasionally substituted for the altar, piseina, and sedilia; for instance, in the transepts at St. Mary's, although not larger than a room of moderate size, there are four windows in each. Two black altar slabs were found lying at the bottom of the two south windows, probably where they had once been used as altars.

The last thing to be noticed is, the changing the rood loft^(a) into a gallery, in 1637—called the “crown gallery,”^(b) from the circumstance of the royal arms being placed on or above it, by which the royal supremacy was asserted over the English church. All the roods disappeared nearly at the same time, and many of the lofts and screens also; in some parishes, however, the order which had been issued for their removal was disregarded, and they were continued for some time after; many are even found at the present time. In the churches near Taunton, we may mention Norton-Fitzwarren and Bishop's-Lydeard, where they still remain. We have heard that the original order for taking down the rood and its loft in the last-mentioned church is still in the possession of one of the parishioners. The crown gallery in St. Mary's, with the Gothic screen beneath, was removed in 1825; it is said that portions of this screen may now be found, used as fencing, in different parts of the parish!^(c)

The several alterations thus mentioned as having taken place during this last period, occurred after the Reformation, and it would seem, from certain

a chantry, and the priest who officiated there was called a chanter, or soul's-priest. The original of chantries was here in the fifteenth century, when the doctrine of purgatory was invented and received. There were many in England before the dissolution, and any man might build a chantry without the leave of the bishop; but in later times none could build these chantries without the king's licence. In the reign of Henry VIII., when the belief in purgatory began to decline, it was thought an unnecessary thing to continue the pensions and endowments of these priests; therefore, anno 37 Henry VIII., cap. 4, these chantries were given to the king, who had power at any time to issue commissions to seize those endowments, and take them into his possession. There were seven chantries founded in this church; the titles of which, the names of the last incumbents, and the amount of the yearly pensions in 1553, were as follows:—

		£	s.	d.
St. Andrew	Henry Bull	5	0	0
St. Michael	John Seyman	4	16	0
Holy Trinity	Ralph Wilkins	5	0	0
Holy Cross Fraternity	W. Trowbridge	4	0	0
St. Ethelred	W. Callow	5	0	0
Virgin Mary	John Pytte	4	0	0
Twing's Chantry.	Alexander Maggot.	3	14	4

^(a) A gallery where a crucifix or rood and other images, usually those of the Virgin Mary and Saint John, were placed.

^(b) The octagon turret, having a staircase leading to the rood loft, was till lately seen in the south transept, but, being much decayed, the present angular pier was erected in its place, to give greater support to the roof and arch; the crevices lights to the stairs are still to be seen on the outside in the wall.

^(c) A few years since the handsome screen in the chancel of St. James's church in this town was taken down, and sold for £3. It now forms a portion of the fittings-up of a cottage in the neighbourhood.

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remains, between the years 1630 and 1670—not so much from a desire to make the church uniform or perfect, as for affording increased accommodation to the parishioners. Multitudes at this time crowded to this sacred temple to listen to the glad tidings of the Gospel delivered by the then vicar, the Rev. George Newton, and his zealous and pious assistants, the Rev. Tristram Welman and the Rev. Joseph Allein; ^(a) there were then no dissenting places of worship in the parish; the population of the town was considerable, arising from the extent of its trade; and having only this church and St. James's, then a small one, ^(b) there must have been difficulty in providing for the accommodation of the people.

We had almost omitted to state one peculiar feature in the construction of this edifice, *viz.*, its having a nave and four aisles; there are but few of a similar arrangement in this country, and we are only able to mention two—those of Kendal, in Westmoreland, and St. Michael's, in Coventry.

Abbe Marite, in his travels in Palestine, describes a church in Bethlehem, called St. Mary Magdalene, a most magnificent structure, having a splendid roof supported by four rows of columns of white marble veined with red, dividing the interior of the church into five aisles. We are not aware if there be any symbolism understood by this arrangement. In the case of St. Mary's, we should rather suppose that it arose more from accidental circumstances than from any original design.

Thus successive fabries arose on the same site, each eclipsing its predecessor in costly magnificence: it was, however, for the people of the nineteenth century, by the judicious, substantial, and chaste restoration of the noble structure, to outvie them all, so that it may be truly said, “the glory of this latter house exceedeth the former.”

We look upon the present church as a great honour and blessing to the town of Taunton. The Tabernacle, for its splendour, became the great ornament and glory of the Jewish camp and nation in the wilderness; and though the outer covering was of badgers' skins, the interior was most gorgeous, that it might be in some measure suitable to the dignity of the great King for whose palace it was designed. ^(c) The beautiful temple of

^(a) See the chapter containing notices of the Vicars of St. Mary's.

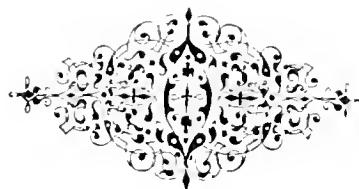
^(b) St. James's Church was considerably enlarged, and the whole of the south aisle built, by the Rev. Dr. Cottle, then incumbent, in the year 1838, at an expense of upwards of £2000, by which 700 additional sittings were obtained. It was previously in a most dangerous state; some of the pillars and the south wall being considerably out of the perpendicular, and only kept from falling, as it afterwards appeared, by the weight of the buttresses on the outside.

^(c) The value of the gold and silver made use of for the work of the Tabernacle, besides the brass and copper, amounted, according to Bishop Cumberland, to upwards of £182,568. The instructions with regard to the Tabernacle were very minute—Exod. xxvi.

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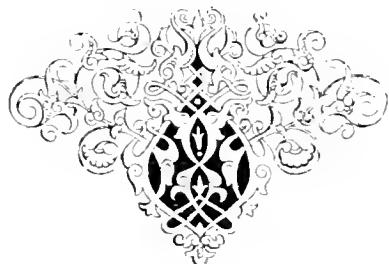
Solomon gave a glory and lustre to the same nation in the land of Judea, and to the city of Jerusalem. Both these buildings were erected with costly splendour by the command of the Almighty, and under His own especial superintendence. We are aware that this outward grandeur is not necessary to secure the Divine presence and blessing, as we learn from our Saviour's discourse with the woman of Samaria; we find, however, that when the people neglected the temple, and allowed it to fall into ruins, God reproached them for dwelling in a ceiled house, while His house laid waste, and commanded them to go to the mountain, and "bring wood to build the house of the Lord," and for their encouragement he said, "I will take pleasure in it." But we take higher ground than the mere magnificence of the building, or the honour it confers on the town; it is a temple "for the King of kings." It is a house of prayer, set apart for the express worship of the great Author of our being; it is a place for instruction, where by the "foolishness of preaching" it may please God to save them who believe. By the simple and primitive arrangements introduced into this church, the rich and poor "meet together," and, in the beautiful language of our Liturgy, "with one accord make their common supplications unto God." May the truth, as it is in Jesus, in its native simplicity and loveliness, be faithfully and affectionately proclaimed in this glorious edifice, as long as one stone shall remain upon another! Of this church, its clergy, and congregation, may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ say, "this is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it; I will abundantly bless her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread; I will also clothe her ministers with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy."





emarks on

he Gothic towers of Somerset.





THE CHURCH, ST. MARY MAGDALENE—15th Century.

emarks on
he Gothic towers of Somerset.

Y. C. Errey, sq.,

Honorary Member of the Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture, &c.



HE Churches of Somerset are remarkable for their beautiful towers; a person travelling by the most ordinary route through the county sees them in rapid succession, each possessing beauty peculiar to itself, though marked by a general composition, to some extent observable in all.

This family resemblance arises mainly from their being built about the same period, and indeed, there are few of an earlier date than the fifteenth century, for though some may be referred to an earlier period, yet most of them appear to have been built in the time of Henry VII.; and tradition further states that Henry, in consideration of the steady support afforded him in his contest with the House of York by the natives of Somerset, founded their churches in a style of unusual splendour.

Without questioning this statement, which rests only upon tradition for support, there would seem to be other adventitious circumstances connected with the county sufficient to account for the excellency of its ecclesiastical architecture. Few tracts of country possess so many kinds of excellent building-stone as Somerset, for within a very limited space are found the quarries of Box, Farley, and Coombe Down, furnishing stone of the oolitic species; in other parts are the quarries of Doulting and Hamdon Hill, of the limestone formation. There are also abundant supplies of the red and green sandstone, and the blue and white lias, extensively scattered

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throughout the county; indeed, there is scarcely any spot in Somersetshire where building materials may not be procured with much facility.^(a)

With advantages like these, it would only be giving our forefathers credit for their ordinary sagacity to suppose that they availed themselves of such resources, and reared those beautiful structures which now excite our admiration, for it is not a scattered few that merit attention, but all, from the largest to the most diminutive, are interesting in their degree.

It is worthy of remark, that in date and style there is a similarity between many of the towers of Suffolk and Somerset; in those of the former county the local material has likewise been greatly conducive to their beauty,—scarcely a church in Suffolk is without some pleasing decoration formed in flint-work; this material is used not only for facing large surfaces of walls, but is introduced in the manner of mosaics, and constitutes a chief means of ornament; in fact, our ancestors *never failed* to avail themselves of the local products, and exhibited their skill by applying them to purposes of extraordinary beauty.

The towers of Suffolk are mostly of the sixteenth century, and though much resembling those of Somerset, yet in many instances they bear a very different proportion to the churches of which they form component parts, the churches are generally of great height, having large and strongly marked clerestories; this is rather the exception than the prevailing character of the Somerset churches, the bodies being low in comparison to their towers, and in some instances quite insignificant by the side of most stately and splendid towers.

On the summit of the high hills, it is not improbable that the towers were intended as sea marks to guide the mariners, thus the more simple and bold their outline, the better would they be suited for this object, and many

(a) The summits of the hills in the immediate neighbourhood of Bath are of the oolitic formation, and have a thickness, probably, of 130 to 150 feet. Masses of this rock are scattered on the slopes of the hills covering the subjacent clays and Fuller's earth, which, with the inferior oolite and calcareous sand, constitute the lowest members of the oolitic group. Sometimes the oolitic beds form outlying eminences, such as Stantonbury Hill, Dundry Hill, and May's Knoll. The oolites rest on a platform of the lias formations, which appear on the lowest portions of the slope of the oolitic hills; the valleys which separate these hills and are drained by rivulets flowing into the Avon, are occupied by the formations of the red marl, or red sandstone. In some places the limestone, which underlies the new red sandstone, occasionally crowns the summits of the hills, but more usually is found in horizontal strata, resting against the elevated beds of the mountain limestone, which latter, with the old red sandstone, forms the constituent mass of Leigh Down and Broadfield Down, near Bristol. The eastern side of the county, from Bath, by Frome, Bruton, and Castle Cary, to Yeovil, and the southern side, from Ycovil, by Ilminster, to Wellington, are occupied by hills of like geological character to those around Bath. Rocks of the green sandstone, and even chalk, are found in many places along the border of the county.

of them answer to this description; ^(a) but whether constructed with this special view or not, their existence must be regarded as a proof of religious zeal; to have reared such lofty and magnificent towers throughout the breadth of the county, as well in retired villages as in populous and wealthy towns, shows that the modern principle of lavishing money to decorate churches where they form features of city improvements, and resting content with mean edifices where less exposed to view, had no favour with the builders of antiquity; their aim was directed to the single purpose of glorifying God, by dedicating to His service the best building they could raise, whether in the frequented city or the secluded hamlet.

Amongst the many admirable towers of this county, the following may certainly be selected as being unusually fine, although numerous others are well deserving of notice:—the towers of St. James and St. Mary, Taunton; also of North Petherton, ^(b) Chew Magna, Evercreech, Huish Episcopi, Dundry, Glastonbury, St. Cuthbert's Wells, Bakewell, Wraxhall, Banwell, Kingsbury, Shepton-Mallet, Mells, Leigh, Bishops'-Lydeard, Chewton Mendip. Of these, none is more justly admired than the splendid tower of St. Mary's Church, Taunton.

It would be satisfactory to know in what year, and to whom belonged the honour of designing so beautiful a structure. The author of the "History of Taunton," appreciating the skill shown in the design, endeavours to identify it with the great Wykeham of Winchester, and contends that the style and character of the tower belong to the fourteenth century; however strongly this opinion may have prevailed when the work alluded to was published, a greatly increased acquaintance with the details and peculiarities of the different periods of mediæval art now convinces us that the tower is not of so early a date as the fourteenth century, and that its erection may safely be assigned to the latter end of the fifteenth century.

There are unfortunately no coats of arms, or cognizances, upon the tower to settle the exact date when it was built; but on the transoms of the two upper series of belfry windows are sculptured angels supporting shields, on which are carved the initials **R. B.** These letters may refer to Richard Beere, Abbot of Glastonbury, who presided over that establishment in the

^(a) Dundry Tower, for example, is known to have been built as a sea-mark. The church itself is very small, but the tower extremely lofty, and being situated at the top of a very high hill, is visible far down the Bristol Channel. It was erected by the merchant-adventurers of Bristol; a stone in the tower has the date 1482.

^(b) This beautiful and elaborately ornamented tower is said to have been built by the same architect who designed St. Mary's tower at Taunton, and there seems nothing unreasonable in this belief. The towers at Chew Magna, Chewton Mendip, and Dundry, are also stated to have been built by one and the same architect, and tradition further reports him to have given the last village its name, by exclaiming, on completing the tower, "Now I have Done dree."

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fifteenth century—a dignitary eminently skilled in architecture, and who built the churches at Glastonbury on which are sculptured the same initials, **R. B.**; it is therefore not unlikely that he may have designed the beautiful tower of St. Mary's Church.^(a) There are evident marks in many of the churches of Somerset which will justify the supposition that one master mind designed them, and the inferior copies can easily be detected.

Amongst so many well-proportioned towers as Somersetshire affords, it is rather a matter for regret that there is not a greater variety in their architectural character. They scarcely admit of distinct classification, still there are some peculiarities in their crowning features which deserve to be noticed; thus many terminate in regular graduated buttresses, diminishing as they rise, and ending in tall and well-designed angular pinnacles; others are strengthened at the angles by buttresses which finish before they reach the top of the tower, and are met by overhanging perforated pinnacles, resting on gargoyle, and having delicately traceried parapets between them. Of this latter kind, the tower of St. Mary's is a remarkable example, but the effect of this arrangement is not always successful; for skilful as the combination of parts may be in design, a repetition of pierced pinnacles and open parapets presents too fragile an appearance for its purpose: such construction in stone is rather unnatural, hence all these crested terminations are found to be disfigured by iron ties, &c., that have been applied at different times to secure them from the destructive effects of high winds.

It may also be observed, notwithstanding the magnificence of this tower as a whole, that there are other marks about it by which we may trace the commencement of the decline in art, which, within the space of another century, terminated in the total debasement of those principles which distinguished the best productions of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A profusion of ornament may at first excite admiration by skilfulness of design and execution, but it cannot satisfy the judgment, if it is adopted to the exclusion of sound principles of construction, or to the

^(a) "Richard Beere was installed Abbot of Glastonbury, January 20th, 1493. He built the new lodgings by the great chamber, called the king's lodgings, in the gallery; as also the new lodgings for secular priests and clerks of our Lady. He likewise built the greatest part of Edgar's Chapel, at the east end of the church; arched the east part of the church at both sides; strengthened the steeple in the middle by a vault and two arches (otherwise it had fallen); made a rich altar of silver gilt, and set it before the high altar; and returning out of Italy (where he had been ambassador), made a chapel of our Lady of Loretto joining to the north side of the body of the church: he made withal a chapel of the sepulchre in the south end of the nave, or body of the church; an almshouse (with a chapel) in the north part of the abbey, for seven or ten poor women; and the manor place at Sharpham, in the park, two miles west from Glastonbury, which had been before nothing else but a poor lodge. He died on the 20th of January, 1524, and was buried in the south aisle of the body of the church, under a plain marble."

prevention of that repose which ought to be a part of every composition in art.^(a)

The ordinary principles of design seem to require that the lower part of a building should be the strongest, and that as the building rises, it should become lighter, the means adopted to effect this, produces of itself a character of ornament; thus the base of a tower may be entirely solid, with the exception of a doorway and window on the west side; it then rises to the ringing chamber, where again but little light is necessary, such as may be obtained from small openings; above this chamber is the belfry, and here considerable perforations in the walls are necessary for the escape of sound; above this story no chamber is ever constructed, it being an object of paramount importance to place the bells in as elevated a position as possible, that the sound emitted may have free course. This useful construction, when merely decorated to give it grace, at once presents an agreeable design, the lower part appearing neither bald or unmeaning, nor the upper part feeble or unnecessarily minute, and if the summit is designed in accordance with this feeling, there is a unity in the whole justified by its purposes.

Bearing these remarks in mind, it may be questioned whether the tower of St. Mary's is not overcharged with parts tending rather to confusion, and the want of projection in the angular buttresses detracts from the strength of expression which such a large vertical mass should possess; the same observation will apply to some of the other towers already named.

It must be admitted that the other examples referred to,—having graduated buttresses, set angularly at each corner, or arranged in couplets rectangularly, rising to the top of the tower, and terminating in solid but well-proportioned turrets or pinnacles,—exhibits as beautiful and consistent an arrangement as can be devised in stone. With a wide projecting base, these angular supports diminish proportionately, stage by stage, and give that pyramidal form to the mass which seldom fails to satisfy the eye, while the continuity of outline at the summit, where the lines are not broken by overhanging cage-like construction, perfects the

^(a) Mr. Welby Pugin, in his "Principles of Pointed Christian Architecture," asserts, that every tower built during the pure style of pointed architecture either was, or was intended to be surmounted by a spire, which is the natural covering for a tower; a flat roof is both contrary to the spirit of the style, and it is also practically bad. There is no instance before the year 1400 of a church tower being erected without the intention, at least, of being covered or surmounted by a spire;—those towers antecedent to that period, which we find without such terminations, have either been left incomplete for want of funds, weakness in the sub-structure, or some casual impediment, or the spires which were often of timber covered with lead have been pulled down for the sake of their materials. In fine, when towers were erected with flat embattled tops, Christian architecture was on the decline, and the omission of the ancient and appropriate termination was strong evidence of that fact.

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design in a part manifestly the most difficult to compose, and where towers are frequently most faulty.

The towers of the parish churches at Wells, Backwell, and Wraxhall, are very good illustrations of this kind, and the first is particularly successful in its proportions.

Further than these varieties in their outlines, they have nothing remarkable in design beyond the richness of detail which generally belongs to them. Each tower, according to its height and bulk, is divided into several stages; the belfries being mostly enriched; the walls pierced by two or more couplet windows on each side, filled in with elaborate open tracery to give vent to the sound of the bells; the other spaces occupied by niches and sunk panelling; the lower stages are necessarily less ornamented, but are well arranged, and by their solidity giving consistency to the whole.

Internally the junctures of the towers and churches are excellent. The ringing loft is in most cases supported upon a stone vaulting of rich fan tracery, having a large circular trap in the centre, for the purpose of lowering or hoisting the bells.^(a) It is to be lamented that the tower arch, fan tracery vaulting, and west window, are in so many cases shut out from the body of the church by a large organ case, or lath-and-plaster screen; happily however, there is a chance that these blemishes to our churches will be removed by the gradual increase of architectural knowledge which is now taking place.

Many of the towers contain good peals of bells, and some of them have curious inscriptions; generally speaking, our ancestors constructed their timber framing with great judgment, but it is a grievous fact, that the careless manner in which repairs have been made in recent times to the wooden cagework, has been the cause of most serious mischief to the towers themselves, several instances might be adduced in proof. When the ringers encounter a difficulty in ringing owing to the weakness of the framing, instead of bracing the parts together, so as to

(a) This beautiful mode of vaulting is essentially English, and is seldom or ever met with in continental architecture; but exquisite specimens are to be found in most of our English churches, either applied as in the case of tower vaulting, or adapted to the soffites of chantry chapels and mural tombs; when used for the latter purposes, it does not possess the mechanical construction belonging to larger examples; it was the latest description of vaulting introduced, and is frequently discovered in the most debased examples of Tudor architecture. There is an exception to this kind of vaulting in the tower of Merton College Chapel, Oxford. The belfry is supported by a curious piece of construction in oak, very skilfully designed with moulded principals and pierced spandrels, having also in the centre a circular lantern-shaped opening, for the admission of the bells. This ingenious piece of carpentry was shut out from view till within a late period, by a wretched lath and plaster ceiling. The corbels supporting the main arched timbers are sculptured with the representations of different orders of ecclesiastics.

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make the framework itself secure, they stiffen it by thrusting struts and wedges between the main timbers and the walls; or if the defective part should be near a window, then by wedging to the window-breast, millions, or window-head, whichever may be nearest, thereby throwing all the strain and vibration of the bells, when in full swing, directly upon those parts; the disastrous effects produced by this system must be manifest: upon observing old bell framing, it will be found perfectly independent of the side walls, and when the peal is in full action the whole cagework may be seen to oscillate considerably, having no contact with the walls, being indeed no more than a dead and inert weight, resting upon stone corbels or set-offs.

It is interesting to observe how carefully and minutely the most concealed detail of every part of a church was formerly finished, regardless of its inaccessible situation. Instances of this may be found in the stair turrets, which form such pleasing appendages to the Somerset towers; the stone newels instead of ending abruptly at the top, are frequently made small vaulting shafts, from which moulded ribs branch over, forming elegant groined termini to the stairs, and even the slit windows by which the stairs are lighted, and the doors of communication to the different stages, evidence the greatest care in design.^(a)

Having noticed a few characteristics of the towers themselves, their positions in reference to the bodies of the churches must be stated. The most general position appears to be at the west end, but in cruciform plans they necessarily stand as centre towers over the junctions of the nave, transept, and chancel. Many also are placed between the nave and chancel where no transept exists, and some are situated at the north and south sides, but these are the exceptions to the common practice.

Large and conspicuous gargoyley are common ornaments to the towers, and they not unfrequently consist of representations of grotesque and debased animals. Monsters both of animal and human shape, are to be seen in most distorted and offensive postures; by some, these oddities are referred to the caprice of the workmen who carved them, but it has also been well observed, that these uncouth devices are meant to represent the vices and depravities of human nature, and placed at the western extremity of the building, to show the distance between holiness and sin; the former state being symbolised by the representations of saints and angels, (which

^(a) When the upper part of the tower of St. Mary's Church, Taunton, was reinstated, in 1745, they very injudiciously made all the angular pinnacles of the same design; the stair-turret has, therefore, no marked character at its summit: this is to be regretted, as a most important feature of the tower is thus lost.

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are usually found at the east end near the altar, or within the precincts of the chancel) where the most sacred mysteries are celebrated.

Amongst all the towers of Somerset, and some of them standing on prominent and lofty ground overlooking the sea, none possess the distinctive features of lantern towers; no indisputable examples of this class are to be found, but the extremely light and open appearance of the angular pinnacles attached to some of them, induce a belief that they might have been formerly used as receptacles for cressets upon occasion of the great festivals of the Church, if not at other times; and this conjecture obtains support from its being known that the upper stages of the tower at Boston, in Lincolnshire, All Saints, York, and old Bow Church, London, were provided with small lanterns for purposes of illumination.^(a) The two latter structures had not the distinctive lantern form as Boston, yet they were furnished with convenient places for receiving lights. The extremely perforated character of pinnacle is not confined exclusively to the Somerset towers; some of the Gloucestershire towers are decorated with similar cage-like turrets, and it can scarcely be concluded that these forms, devised with so much skill, were adopted without reference to a useful purpose. The open parapets which connect these pinnacles retain the outward trace of battlements, but are usually so ornamented as scarcely to be recognised under that form; in this respect they differ greatly from the battlements of the adjoining churches of Dorset. The Dorsetshire towers are of late date, and almost invariably finish at their summits with bold and expressive battlements; it is not however to be inferred that they were used for defence, as they had become mere features of ornament, though if occasion required, they might be found quite serviceable for protection.^(b)

Although Somerset is so distinguished for its towers, it is not wholly without spires; the churches of Crocombe, Doulting, Bridgewater, Yatton, and a few others, have these graceful superstructures; but the period when they were common crowning features had passed away, and the enriched perpendicular towers had succeeded them. The exquisite spires which enrich the scenery of Northamptonshire, may all be assigned to a full century anterior to the erection of the Somerset churches.

The preceding observations being intended merely to point out a few leading characteristics of the principal towers, induced by a desire to call special attention to the remarkable one of St. Mary's Church, Taunton, it

^(a) On one of the turrets of Hadley Church, near Barnet, Middlesex, there was formerly a small pot, filled with combustible matter, to serve for a cresset or beacon.

^(b) In some cases the towers of churches were formerly used for defence; Rugby Tower, in Warwickshire, is known to have been occupied by soldiers.

would be taking too wide a range to institute a parallel between them and the towers of other counties; but such an investigation would afford an interesting subject of disquisition, for though, upon a cursory glanee, there might not seem any conspicuous difference in them, yet, were they carefully delineated, much variation would be found in their designs, and a general rule of proportion might be ascertained, to account for the superiority which some examples possess over others. It is to be hoped that while the churches of Yorkshire, Warwickshire, Cambridgeshire, and other counties, are being illustrated, with a view to make known their interesting features, the magnificent churches of Somerset may not be forgotten. The towers alone belonging to these churches would richly illustrate any work.^(a) The want of early records, pertaining to nearly all our parochial churches, deprives us of the information respecting the founders of them, and we can only learn imperfectly from heraldic badges and stained glass of those families who were formerly benefactors. The disappointment arising from this fact might of itself, without higher motives, induce us to adopt the excellent recommendation of J. H. Markland, Esq., who, in an admirable letter to the Oxford Archaeological Society, has suggested that, in lieu of the incongruous tablets, sarcophagi, &c., which are continually thrust into churches as memorials to deceased friends, the mourning survivors should "furnish a pillar, a transept, or a choir," to some church, whereby the privilege of contributing to build God's house might be shown; and to perpetuate the memory of the deceased, a small brass plate might be inserted, with the necessary inscription, in some suitable part.

A good illustration of the practice here recommended, may be seen in a curious church at the village of Wanborough, Wilts. having both a tower and a spire: the latter is placed over arches, at the junction of the nave and chancel: the tower is at the west end, and on a small brass plate is the following inscription:—

Orate p Thoma Polton e Editha ure ei defunctis Magno Philipo, Archmo. Glouceste. Agneta e xiii blis eor eor altis. dno Roberto. Everard, vicario e oib suis pocheais. q. h. capanile icerpt A. Dno. xcccxv.

"Pray for Thomas Polton and Editha, his wife, defunct; for Master Philip, Archdeacon of Gloucester, Agnes, and fourteen others their children; for Sir Robert Everard, vicar, and all his parishioners, who this tower commenced, Anno Domini 1435."

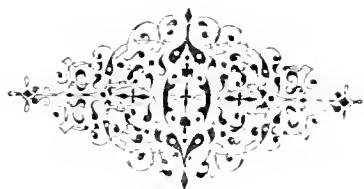
^(a) The late Mr. Gage Rokewode published a very interesting account of the Ecclesiastical Round Towers of Norfolk and Suffolk, illustrated by some excellent engravings: to those who wish to pursue this subject further, the perusal of his communication to the Antiquarian Society, published in the 23rd volume of the "Archæologia," will afford much pleasure.

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The churches of Long Melford and Lavenham, Suffolk, have also inscriptions worked under the external stringcourses and other places, imploring the suffrages of the faithful for the repose of those pious personages who erected distinct portions of the building, such as the tower, the aisle, the porch, and side chapels, each part being inscribed with the date of its erection.

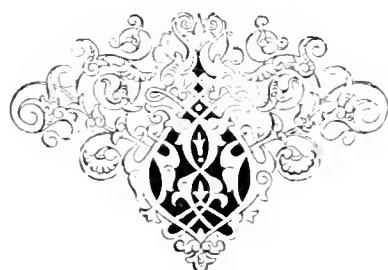
Without adopting the literal form of these inscriptions, we may at least imitate the spirit which prompted men of old to dedicate largely of this world's goods to the enlargement or restoration of churches, and thus secure to others increased opportunities of enjoying the blessings of "common prayer."

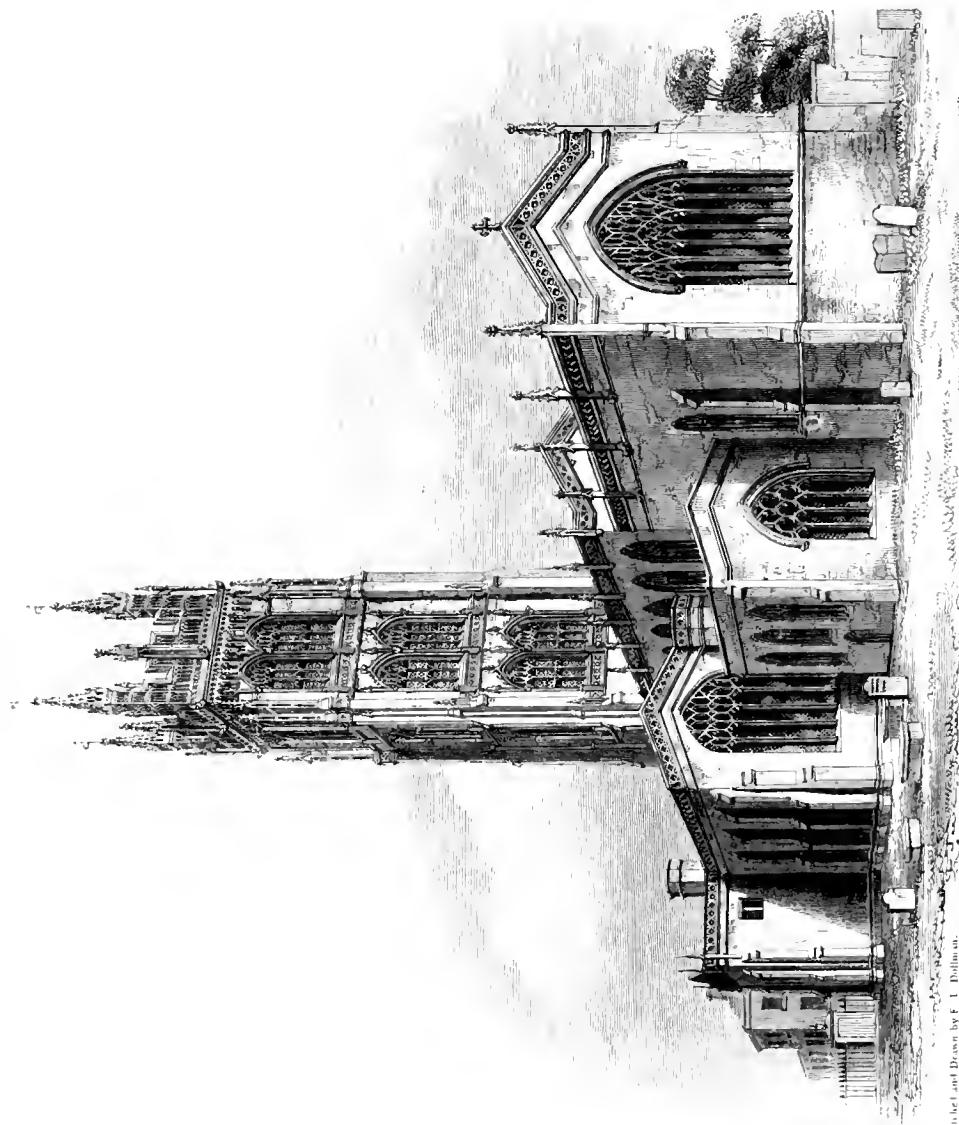




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Sketch and Drawn by F. T. Dillman.

SOUTH-EAST VIEW OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE.

he

ecclesiastical architecture of england.

Date of Trinity College, Cambridge.



Praise of Pointed Architecture—Its peculiarly appropriate character in the design
and construction of Religious Edifices.

For all the different kinds of architecture, that have been consecrated at various periods to the service of Religion, none appears more calculated to inspire the mind with awe and veneration than that peculiar style employed in ecclesiastical edifices during the middle ages, originally invented by the Normans, and carried by their successors to the highest point of perfection. It is true that the classic orders of Greece and Rome have never been surpassed, as presenting models of grandeur and beauty in the construction of palaces and public buildings of a merely secular character; but where is the temple, raised by pagan hands, and dedicated to imaginary deities, that can compare with the sacred interior of the Christian Cathedral of our forefathers, glorious with its many-clustered columns and vaulted roofs, long-drawn aisles, and richly-storied windows—fabries conceived in the loftiest spirit of devotion, and consecrated to the living God!

It is not, however, by the vast scale only and stupendous dimensions of these hallowed piles, that admiration is principally excited; vastness alone, without variety, might awaken astonishment, but could never enchain

attention; and mere massiveness, uninformed with the finer principles of Art, would produce a sentiment rather of repulsion than delight. Wherin, then, consists the peculiar charm of these structures? In the admirable adaptation of the various component parts to form one complete, grand, and entire edifice, where arch upon arch, and column upon column, are beautifully blended into one harmonious mass: a mighty and magnificent plan, embracing in its ample scope an almost infinite amount of minute and appropriate details; an extreme simplicity of outline, susceptible of even the greatest profusion of decoration.

But it is chiefly in a religious point of view, by reason of its sublime and awful character, that the Pointed Style^(a) is most imposing: for where can the heart be more deeply affected with solemn and devout impressions, than when buried in meditation beneath the vaulted canopy^(b) of centuries, only not less perishable than the vault of heaven^(c) itself, and probably destined to endure as long: or where can the eye glisten with so fervent a delight, as while gazing on the triumphs of Faith, pictured in the calm but brilliant portraiture of evangelists, and apostles, saints, martyrs, and confessors, each resting within his own gorgeous tabernacle,^(d) and their brows all radiant with the light of immortality: or who, standing upon the ashes of the dead, and surrounded with monuments so enduring, feels not in himself that, although the creature of a day, he is the pilgrim of eternity; while the full soul, swelling with the choral symphonies, and borne upon the wings of devotion, contemplates the glories of that loftier and more magnificent temple above, where the service never ceases, and the hallelujahs never die?^(e)

(a) "Pointed architecture is so termed in allusion not only to its characteristic arch, but to its pinnacles, spires, &c., and seems most appropriate and most expressive of its character."—Pugin's Specimens of Gothic Architecture, vol. i., p. 2.

(b) The groined nave of Wells Cathedral, after a lapse of six hundred years, presents as firm an appearance as when it was first constructed. So also many other cathedrals.

(c) "The heavens are the work of thy hands—they shall perish."—Psalm cii., 25, 26.

(d) The idea of tabernacles was probably derived from the expression of St. Peter to our Lord at the Transfiguration, "Lord, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."—Matthew xvii., 4. But "the Lord of life and glory" needed no other than that tabernacle of humanity, which he had already hallowed by being himself enshrined within it. On another occasion also, our Lord was pleased to represent himself under a similar figure, which the Jews misunderstood in reference to their temple, when "He only spake of the temple of his body."

(e) Some very excellent individuals object to the decoration of ecclesiastical edifices on the principle that exceeding plainness is more appropriate to a place of religious worship. But where do we discover the archetype of this style in Nature? Is not the Universe one vast Temple, and has not the Supreme Grand Architect adorned it with a splendour and beauty that reflect His glory on every side? Moreover, shall the shrines of ambition and luxury glow with the brightest trophies of Genius, and the richest treasures of Art, while the temples of Him, who is the All-bounteous Giver of "every good and perfect gift," remain neglected and unadorned?

Section E.

Ecclesiastical Architecture from the earliest period to the Norman Conquest—British Churches—Saxon invasion, and triumph of Paganism—Restoration of Christianity by Augustine—Early Saxon foundations at Canterbury, Rochester, and London—At York—At Wearmouth—At Ripon and Hexham—Abbot Benedict Biscopius and Bishop Wilfred—Churches at Glastonbury, and splendid chapel constructed there by King Ina—Albert, Archbishop of York—Eanbald and Alcun—Destruction of churches by the Danes—King Alfred the Great—His glorious character—The Nursing-Father of the Church—Repairs the ruined monasteries and churches—His example imitated by his successors—Munificence of King Edgar—Ramsey Abbey—Architectural form and character of the Saxon churches.



N the first introduction^(a) of Christianity in this island, shortly after the death of its Heavenly Founder, the establishment of the new religion induced the necessity of consecrated edifices for the due performance of divine worship, and the celebration of its holy mysteries. In this early dawn of civilisation, it is probable that these primitive fabrics were imperfectly constructed, and most frequently of perishable materials,—wood and wicker-work,^(b) with a simple coating of clay, composed the walls; and the lowly thatch, “where the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young,” afforded the sole covering for the altars of the Lord of Hosts! These sanctuaries have long since passed

^(a) “Tempore, ut scimus, summo Tiberii Cesaris,” &c. —Gildas.

^b Of this description was that primitive “oratory of bark’t alder or wickerwands winded and twisted together, with a roof of straw or rushes,” built at Glastonbury by the first missionaries, and afterwards “preserved by Paulinus, the first bishop of York, out of reverence for the holy personages who had prayed in it, when he built a more decent church of wood and metal (lead) over it.”—Eyston’s Little Monument to the once famous Abbey and Borough of Glastonbury, p. 6; Milner’s Treatise on the Ecclesiastical Architecture of England, p. 22.

The church at York, also, in which King Edwin was baptized by Paulinus, was a wooden structure, raised for the purpose, and subsequently enclosed in the more spacious church of stone, erected by that monarch. “Baptizatus est autem Eburaci in die sancto Paschæ—in ecclesia Sti. Petri Apostoli, quam ipse de ligno citato opere erexit. Curavit majorem ipso in loco et angustiorem de lapide fabricare basilicam, in cuius medio ipsum quod prius fecerat oratorium includeretur.”—Bedræ, Hist. Eccl., lib. ii., c. 14.

away—crumbled in the dust with their humble worshippers; but doubtless many a site still remains, supporting on its consecrated soil the majestic Cathedral of a much later age, when the names and the histories of their early founders were either forgotten, or but faintly echoed in the legends of tradition.

Gildas, the most ancient of our native historians, bears honourable testimony to the piety and zeal of the British Christians, in re-constructing the churches which had been destroyed during the Dioclesian persecution; and even St. Chrysostom^(a) directs attention to the churches and altars in this island. These early Christians, however, were permitted to enjoy but a brief repose; for shortly after the withdrawal of the Roman legions to protect the empire at home, so fierce a struggle ensued between them and the Saxons, whose aid they had solicited against the northern barbarians, and who treacherously turned the tide of conquest against their feeble suppliants, that the kingdom was filled with anarchy and ruin. All order was subverted—the churches were again destroyed—the priests slain at the very altars,^(b) and though the British Church was never entirely extinguished,^(c) yet paganism for a time prevailed.

By the Saxon invasion was ushered in the gloomy idolatry of the North, and the grim spirit of Odin triumphed over the mild genii of Christianity. This period of gross darkness, attended with almost a total eclipse of the light of the Gospel, overshadowed the kingdoms of the Heptarchy for considerably upwards of a century, until the blessing was again restored by the zeal of Gregory the Great.

In A.D. 596, this eminent pontiff despatched Augustine, with forty monks, from Rome, to rekindle the faded lamp of Christianity in the Saxon dominions; and so marked was his success, that, on the conversion of Ethelbert, King of Kent, an event greatly accelerated by the influence of his pious queen,^(d) Canterbury was assigned him by the sovereign for his residence; and the Pope, as a reward for his exertions, conferred on him the archiepiscopal pall, with instructions to establish twelve sees in his province. The good example of this powerful prince was almost universally

^(a) Καὶ γὰρ κάκι ἐκκλησίαι
Καὶ θυσιαστήρια πεπήγασιν.

ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΜΟΥ ὅτι Θεὸς ὁ Χριστός.

^(b) “ Ruebant ædificia publica simul et privata, passim Sacerdotes inter altaria trucibantur.”—Beda, Eccl. Hist. lib. i., c. 15.

^(c) “ It appears from William of Malmesbury, that the British anachorets of Glastonbury continued to follow their course of life in the fastnesses of their retired island, such as Glastonbury then was, during the whole period of the Pagan-Saxon persecution.”—Milner, p. 22.

^(d) Bertha, daughter of Caribert, King of Paris, and, previously to her marriage with Ethelbert, a Christian princess.

followed. The ancient religion revived—the Church once more arose from the dust, and put on her beautiful garments.

On the king's conversion to Christianity, he applied himself with the greatest zeal to the noble work of building churches. He founded a new one for the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul,^(a) which Augustine was then erecting, and designed it as the final resting-place for himself, his successors—the kings of Kent, and the archbishops of Canterbury. He also founded the church of St. Andrew, at Rochester,^(b) which he endowed for an episcopal see; and having prevailed on his nephew Sebert, the King of the East Saxons, who reigned under him, to erect a new bishopric in his kingdom; he fixed the see at London, and founded and endowed the cathedral church of St. Paul^(c) in that city. These three were the earliest churches erected by the Saxons after their conversion to Christianity—the blessed first-fruits of the sacred mission conducted by Augustine.

It is probable also, that at the same period the old British churches in various parts of the kingdom, which had flourished under the Roman dominion, and survived the havoc of Pagan desolation, were repaired and restored to their original use. Of these pristine structures two were still existing in the city of Canterbury^(d) alone—the one dedicated to St. Martin, on the east side of the city, wherein Queen Bertha performed her devotions, and assigned to Augustine and his companions on their first arrival; and the other, that which the king after his conversion presented to Augustine for his archiepiscopal see, having previously repaired and dedicated it to our blessed Saviour. To render the triumph of Christianity complete, the temples used by the idolatrous Saxons were consecrated to Divine worship; Pope Gregory recommending Augustine^(e) not to demolish the temples, but only to purify them by the destruction of their idols, and then to consecrate them to the service of the living God. These, and the renovated British churches, may be reasonably considered the prototypes of many of the churches^(f) afterwards erected in the kingdom.

In A. D. 627, Edwin, King of the Northumbrians, having been converted and baptized, founded a noble church at York, which he dedicated to St. Peter; and about the year A. D. 676, the famous Benedict

^(a) Bede, *Hist. Ecel.*, lib. i., cap. 33.

^(b) Ibid., lib. ii., cap. 3. "Dedicated to St. Andrew, out of respect to the monastery of St. Andrew at Rome, of which Augustine was originally a member, and the arms of this see are borne in reference to the instrument of martyrdom of the patron saint"—Winkle's *Cathedrals, Introduction*, p. x.

^(c) Ibid., lib. ii., cap. 3.

^(d) Ibid., lib. i., cap. 26.

^(e) Ibid., cap. 30.

^(f) *Monast. Angl.*, vol. iii., p. 298.

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Biscopius,^(a) Abbot of Wearmouth, in the vicinity of Gyrwi, built St. Peter's Church in that monastery, having previously undertaken a journey to France for the express purpose of engaging workmen to construct it after the Roman manner. On the completion of this building, he sent into France for artificers skilled in the mystery of making glass to glaze the windows, an art until that time unknown to the inhabitants of Britain.

About the same period, A. D. 676, Wilfred, Bishop of York, founded the conventional church of Ripon,^(b) in Yorkshire, and the cathedral church of Hexham,^(c) in Northumberland. Three other churches also at Hexham claimed him for their founder; and under his auspices, the pious Etheldreda founded and established the church and convent of Ely. This munificent prelate, the Wolsey of his age, by the favour and liberality of his sovereigns, the kings of Northumberland, rose to such a pitch of greatness, as to vie with princes in his state; and attained such opulence, as enabled him to found several rich monasteries. In the prosecution of these undertakings he invited the most distinguished builders and artists from Rome, Italy, France, and other countries, and according to his biographers Eddius and Malmesbury, Wilfrid was eminent for his knowledge and skill in the science of architecture, and himself the principal director in all these works.

In A. D. 716, Ethelbald founded the abbey of Crowland, in Lincolnshire; and about A. D. 719, Ina endowed and erected the larger church at Glastonbury, in Somersetshire. William of Malmesbury, in his tract "De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiae,"^(d) speaks (p. 310) of the erection of the larger church of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, which he attributes to Ina, King of the West Saxons; and he says, "that, as there were several churches there, he shall relate the truth as to their situation and founders. The first and most ancient was erected by twelve disciples of the Apostles St. Philip and St. James; and this was situated on the west side of the others. The second was built by St. David, Bishop of St. Asaph, on the east side of the old church, and was dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Twelve men,^(e) who came from the north part of Britain, erected the third, which in like manner was situated on the east side of the old church. The fourth and largest was built by King Ina, and dedicated to our Saviour and the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. It was

(a) Bedæ, Hist. Abbatum Wiremuth et Gyrw, p. 295.

(b) Eddii Vita S. Wilfredi, inter XV. Scriptores, cap. xvi., p. 59., a Gale.

(c) Eddius, sibi supra, p. 62.

(d) Inter XV. Scriptores a Gale, p. 310.

(e) The names of these pious pilgrims from the north were "Morgan, Cargur, Badmor, or Cathmor, Merguid, Morvined, Morehel, Morecant, Boten, Morgan, Mortineil, and Glasteing."—William of Malmesbury, p. 310.

on the eastern side of the others, and founded and endowed for the soul of his brother Mules, who had been burnt at Canterbury by the inhabitants of that city, though on what occasion does not appear."

"In this church, founded by Ina, there is no reason to suppose there was any variation of style from the mode of building before observed; but, in addition to this, Malmsbury has inserted a description of a chapel constructed by the direction and at the expense of the same king, Ina, so singular as to require particular mention, and so splendid as not only apparently to surpass all former edifices in magnificence, but almost to exceed belief.^(a) The following is the substance of his narration:—the same king also caused a chapel to be constructed of gold and silver, with ornaments and vessels in like manner of gold and silver; and placed it within a larger, for the making of which chapel he gave 2640 pounds of silver. The altar consisted of 264 pounds of gold; the cup, with the paten or dish, of ten pounds of gold; the incense pot of eight pounds and twenty marks of gold;^(b) the candlesticks, of twelve pounds and an half of silver; the covers of the books of the Gospel, of twenty pounds, and sixty marks of gold; the vessels for the water, and the other vessels of the altar, of seventeen pounds of gold; the dishes of eight pounds of gold; the vessel for the holy water, of twenty pounds of silver; and the image of our Saviour, and of St. Mary and the twelve Apostles, of 175 pounds of silver, and thirty-eight pounds of gold. The palls for the altar, and the priests' vestments; were skilfully interwoven all over with gold and precious stones—and this treasure, in honour of the Virgin Mary, the king bestowed upon the monastery of Glastonbury."

About the year A. D. 770, the noble and accomplished Albert,^(c) Archbishop of York, re-built the church of St. Peter in that city, originally founded by King Edwin, but then in a ruinous state in consequence of the effects of a fire which had occurred A. D. 741. The principal architects engaged in this structure were two members of his own church, and who had been educated by him—namely, Eanbald, his successor in the see of

^(a) Hawkins's *Hist. of Gothic Architecture*, pp. 57, 58, 59.

^(b) The expression in the original is "xx. mancis auri." Du Fresne, in his *Glossary*, says, "mancus is a mark, a certain weight of gold or silver."

^(c) "This Albert was of a noble family, and a native of York; in his younger days he was sent by his parents to a monastery, where, making a great proficiency in learning, he was ordained a deacon, and afterwards a priest; being taken into the family of Archbishop Egbert, to whom he was nearly related in blood, he was by him preferred to the mastership of the celebrated school at York, where he employed himself in educating youth in grammar, rhetoric, and poetry, and taught also astronomy, natural philosophy, and divinity. He afterwards travelled, and visited Rome and the most eminent seats of learning abroad, and was solicited by several foreign princes to stay, but declined it; and returning home, he brought with him a fine collection of books he had met with in his travels, and soon after was made Archbishop of York."—Bentham's *Essay*, p. 41.

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York, and the learned Alcuin; both kindred spirits, and ardently devoted to the work of their great master. From the description of this church preserved in the poem of Alcuin,^(a) who embalms in grateful verse the memory of his illustrious friend, it would appear to have presented many of the features of the more finished edifices of a later age; and the conclusion may be fairly drawn, that ecclesiastical architecture, even at this early period, had already attained a high degree of excellency.

In the ninth century, the repeated irruptions of the Danes were attended with the most fatal destruction to the monasteries and churches in the kingdom. War, bloodshed, and desolation polluted the land; the arts and sciences, the fair offspring of peace, languished; religion and literature were fast sinking into contempt.^(b) In the midst of these national calamities, it pleased Providence to raise up a deliverer in the person of Alfred the Great, who not only rescued his country from the thraldom of foreign oppression, but exalted the state to a greater than its former dignity. Though incessantly engaged in the toils and tumults of war, having commanded personally in fifty-four pitched battles, he laid the foundation of institutions, which will render his name illustrious to the end of time. He was the creator of the navy of Britain, protector of her commerce, the munificent patron of letters and the arts, and above all the Nursing-Father of her Church. Under his paternal hand, Religion and the fallen fanes revived; Justice was enthroned in the heart of the constitution; literature and science re-kindled their expiring lights. In fine, he was the paragon of princes, a miracle of wisdom, patriotism, and virtue. Among his other accomplishments, this illustrious prince was distinguished for his knowledge of architecture,^(c) and founded two monasteries, Athelney and Shaftesbury. He also rebuilt many of the churches which had suffered from the violence of the Danes, in which

^(a) "Ast nova basilicæ miræ structura diebus
Præsulis hujus erat jam cœpta, peracta, sacrata.
Hæc nimis alta domus solidis suffulta columnis,
Supposita quæ stant curvatis arecubus, intus
Emicat egregiis laquearibus atque fenestris,
Pulchraque porticibus fulget circumdata multis,
Plurima diversis retinens solaria tectis,
Quæ triginta tenet variis ornatibus aras.
Hoc duo discipuli templum, doctore jubente,
Ædificarunt Eanbalodus et Alcuinus, ambo
Concordes operi devota mente studentes.
Hoc tamen ipse pater socio cum presule templum
Ante die decima quam clauderet ultima vite
Lunina præsentis, Sophia sacraverat almae."

Alcuin's Poem, " De Pontificibus et Sanctis Ecclesiæ Ebor." a Gale.

^(b) Asser. de Rebus Gestis Alfredi, p. 27.

^(c) "In arte architectonica summus."—Malmesb. de Reg. Angl.

pious example he was imitated by his son, Edward (who succeeded him, A.D. 900), Athelstan, and his successors.

But it was reserved for the peaceful times of King Edgar to complete the good work commenced by Alfred; and he fulfilled the task with the most creditable zeal and assiduity. He conducted his improvements on so large a scale, that there was not a single monastery or church in England, but bore testimony to his liberality.^(a) Among the most remarkable structures of this reign was the famous abbey of Ramsey, in Huntingdonshire, founded A.D. 974, by Ailwyn, styled alderman of all England, with the assistance of Oswald, Bishop of Worcester, afterwards Archbishop of York.

Having enumerated some of the most eminent of the ancient Saxon churches, with the names of their founders, it now remains to give a brief account of their architectural form and character. And first, with regard to their form; this was originally derived from the Roman Basilica, or hall of justice; many of which, on the establishment of Christianity by Constantine, were converted into churches, and furnished the models for future ecclesiastical erections. The interior of the Basilica, being divided by rows of columns, suggested the arrangement of the nave and aisles; and in the semicircular recess at the extreme end appropriated to the tribune, originated the apsis, or semicircular eastern termination of the Saxon and early Norman churches. Hence, in those days the terms basilica and ecclesia were used synonymously to represent the sacred edifice.^(b) The church of St. Peter at York, founded by King Edwin, A.D. 627, was in the form of a square, or parallelogram.^(c) On the same plan also, or rather of an oblong figure, with the addition of the semicircular apsis, was the old conventional church at Ely,^(d) founded A.D. 673, and this was the general form of the earliest Saxon churches. The introduction of towers^(e) and transepts was the improvement of a subsequent age, when by the adoption of the Latin cross, the figure most prevalent in Italy, the churches were rendered cruciform structures. Thus the abbey church at Ramsey, founded

^(a) "Non fuit in Anglia monasterium sive ecclesia enjus non emendaret cultum vel aedificia."—Monast. Angl., vol. i., p. 33.

^(b) This is now universally designated by the appellation of "Church," the etymological derivation of which is as follows:—"Temples dedicated to God were called in Greek, Κυριακά (in Latin, Dominice), the 'Lord's houses.' From the word Κυριακόν, cometh the Saxon word Cyric or Kyrk, and, by adding a double aspiration to it, our usual word Chyreh or Church, as it were to put us in mind whose these houses are, namely, the 'Lord's houses.'"—Spelman.

^(c) "Per quadrum cœpit aedificare basilicam."—Beda, Hist. Eccl., lib. ii., cap. 14.

^(d) For a ground-plan of this church, see plate v., figure 7, Bentham's Essay on Gothic Architecture.

^(e) "The churches of Italy had towers in the eighth century, and probably soon after that period they were introduced into England."—Milner.

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by Ailwyn, A. D. 974, was adorned with two towers,^(a) one in the west front, and the other in the intersection of the cross; thus, also, the ancient cathedral at Canterbury displayed these grand appendages surmounting the extremities of the south and north transepts.^(b)

With regard to the mode of building adopted by our Saxon ancestors, as no entire edifice of that age at present exists, and even the vestiges of their architecture are so little known, it would be difficult minutely to describe its peculiar characteristics. That the style was not an indigenous production, but of exotic origin, is proved by the fact of its having been imported from Rome; and history expressly records that both St. Benedict Biscop and St. Wilfrid made frequent journeys to that city, and engaged Roman workmen^(c) to execute their buildings in England. At that period the ancient Roman architecture, having gradually declined since the Augustan era, had become greatly debased from its original purity, yet upon such models as Rome could then furnish was the Saxon style founded. Hence the form of the Saxon arch,^(d) which was uniformly semicircular—the massive pier, for the most part, either circular or square—and the generally plain and unadorned character of Saxon masonry. Such may be regarded among the more prominent features of this, the earliest style of English ecclesiastical architecture.

Time, however, and the hand of man—which builds to-day, and destroys to-morrow—have left so few memorials of this distant age, that it is rather from the description of these religious edifices, preserved in ancient monastic records, than from any authentic remains of the original structures themselves, we may hope to obtain an adequate idea of their pristine greatness and

(a) "Duae quoque turres ipsis teetorum culminibus eminebant, quarum minor versus occidentem, in fronte basilicae pulebrum intrantibus insulam a longe spectaculum præhebat; major vero in quadrifidae structuræ medio columnas quatuor, porrectis de alia ad aliam arcibus sibi invicem connexas, ne laxè defluerent, deprimebat."—Hist. Ramesiensis, inter xv. Scriptores, edit. per Galc. cap. xx., p. 399.

(b) "Sub medio longitudinis aulæ ipsius (Ecclesiæ Cantuariensis) duæ erant turres prominentes ultra ecclesiæ alas; quarum una, quæ in austro erat, sub honore B. Gregorii altare dedicatum habebat, et, in latere, principale hostium (ostium) ecclesiæ, quod *Suthdure* dicitur. Alia vero turris in aquilonali plagâ, è regione illius, condita fuit in honore B. Martini."—Eadmer, apud Gervas. Dorob. "De Combust. et Reparat. Ecc. Dorob."

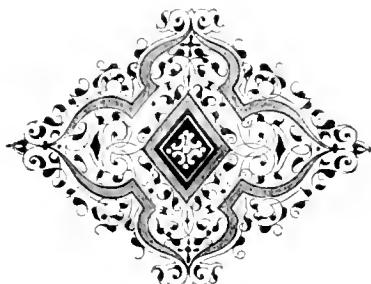
(c) Bedæ, lib. iv., c. 2. "Ædificia mirabile quantum expolivit arbitratu quidem multa suo, sed et eæmentariorum, quos ex Româ spes munificientiæ attraxerat, magisterio."—Will. Malm. De Pontif., lib. iii. "Architectos sibi mitti petiit qui, juxta morem Romanorum ecclesiam de lapide ingenti ipsi facerent."—Bedæ, lib. v., c. 22.

(d) Sir Christopher Wren, speaking of the old abbey church at Westminster, built by King Edgar, thus records his opinion of Saxon architecture:—"This, 'tis probable, was a good strong building, after the manner of the age, not much altered from the Roman way. We have some forms of this ancient Saxon way, which was with piers, or round pillars (stronger than Tusean or Doric), round-headed arches and windows."—Letter to the Bishop of Rochester, in Wren's "Parentalia."

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renown. Thus the church erected by St. Wilfrid at Hexham,^(a) in the latter end of the seventh century, was celebrated as a miracle of art, and declared to be superior to any other similar edifice on this side of the Alps. This famous church stood nearly to the end of the twelfth century. The description of it left by Richard, Prior of Hexham, who flourished about A. D. 1180, is valuable, as presenting a picture of one of the most perfect of the ancient Saxon churches.

^(a) "Profunditatem ecclesiæ (Hagustaldensis) cryptis et oratoriis subterraneis et viarum anfractibus inferius cum magnâ industriâ fundavit. Parietes autem quadratis et variis et bene politis columnis suffulitos et tribus tabulatis distinctos, immensæ longitudinis et altitudinis erexit. Ipsos etiam et capitella columnarum quibus sustentantur et arcum sanctuarii historiis et imaginibus et variis celaturarum figuris ex lapide prominentibus, et picturarum et colorum grâta varietate, mirabilique decore decoravit. Ipsum quoque corpus ecclesiæ appenticiis et porticibus undique circumcinxit, quæ miro atque inexplicabili artificio per parietes et coecas inferius et superius distinxit. Denique citra Alpes nullum tale tunc temporis reperiri poterat"—Ricard. Prior. "de stat Hagust. Ecc.," c. iii.; Twysden, x Serip "Neque ullam dñm aliam citra Alpes montes talem (sicut Hagustaldensem) aedificatam audivimus."—Eddius, "Vita S. Wilf.," c. xxii.; see also Will. Malm. "De Pontif.," lib. iii., p. 273.



Section II.

Ecclesiastical Architecture from the Norman Conquest to the Reformation—Passion of the Normans for this Art—Their magnificent Structures—The Norman Style—Its characteristics—Introduction of the Pointed Arch—Norman enrichments—Preservation of Norman doorways—Examples of the Norman Style in its early and pure state—In its mixed or transition state—Description of the east end of Canterbury Cathedral—The Early Pointed Style—Its beautiful and simple character—Architectural details—Examples of the Early Pointed Style—The Decorated Style—Its splendid and gorgeous character—This Style the perfection of the Art—Architectural details—Examples of the Decorated Style—Decline of the Art—The Florid or Perpendicular Style—Its costly and overloaded character—Architectural details—Examples of the Florid or Perpendicular Style—Destruction of the Art completed by the ruin of the Monasteries—Debased style—Present revival of the ancient styles—Aspirations for the future.



ON the establishment of the Normans in England, after the successful termination of the invasion by William, a new era arose in architecture, and express mention is made by our historians of a new style of building,^(a) introduced immediately preceding this period by King Edward the Confessor, and applied by him to the construction of the abbey church at Westminster. This church, in which he was buried,^(b) was consecrated on Innocents' day, 28th of December, 1065, only eight days before the death of the royal founder; and remained for nearly a century afterwards the grand model for many of the ecclesiastical erections in the kingdom. Edward,^(c) the last of the Saxon line, though born in England, had been educated in Normandy, and during his residence there imbued so strong an attachment to the habits and customs of the foreign court, that after his accession to

^(a) "Ecclesiam ædificationis genere novo fecit."—W. Malmsb.

^(b) "Defunctus autem Rex beatissimus in crastino sepultus est Londini, in Ecclesia, quam ipse novo compositionis genere construxerat; a qua post, multi Ecclesias construentes, exemplum adepti, opus illud expensis cœmulabantur sumptuosis."—Matt. Paris' Hist., p. 1.

^(c) "Rex Edwardus natus in Anglia, sed nutritus in Normannia, et diutissime immoratus, pene in Gallicum transierat, adduecens ac attrahens de Normannia plurimos, quos variis dignitatibus promotos in immensus exaltabat—cepit ergo tota terra sub rege, et sub aliis Normannis introductis Anglicos ritus dimittere et Francorum mores in multis imitari."—Ingulphi Hist., p. 62, edit. Gale.

the throne he introduced them into this country. Hence, also, his extreme partiality to the natives of France and Normandy, very many of whom he advanced to the highest dignities, and there is every reason to believe that the Normans supplied both the architects and materials for his structure.

The passion of this warlike race for ecclesiastical architecture forms a prominent feature in their character. Even during the few years that the Conqueror reigned in Normandy, previously to his invasion of England, he founded two sumptuous churches and abbeys, and his nobles nearly forty; each vieing with the other in the magnificence of their respective structures. Indeed, at this period Normandy could boast, in her abbeys of Bee and Caen, the most splendid schools of literature and the arts, and more particularly of architecture, that could be found in Europe; the former of these producing those great architects, Lanfranc and Anselm, successively Archbishops of Canterbury, and Gundulph, Bishop of Rochester. With such examples, it is by no means surprising that the Norman prelates and abbots left so many memorials of their skill and ability in the science; for, in less than half a century after the Conquest, there was scarcely a cathedral or conventional church which was not restored or rebuilt by one of their order.^(a)

In the construction of these churches they affected a magnificence altogether unknown to the ancient Saxons, laying out the ground-plan of their edifices on a much grander scale,^(b) and carrying up the columns and arches to a far greater altitude. To impart additional beauty to the masonry, they covered the walls with a series of semi-circular arches, and to enhance the real loftiness of the building, three successive tiers of these arcades were frequently ranged one above the other. Within the ample interior, beneath the flooring, crypts or subterranean chapels, although previously used in a few of the chief Saxon churches, were now more generally introduced.

Notwithstanding, however, these vast improvements, and the consequent

^(a) "At one and the same time these vast and costly works were carrying forward by Mauritius in London, Lanfranc at Canterbury, Thomas at York, Walkelyn at Winchester, Gundulph at Rochester, Remigius at Lincoln, William at Durham, St. Wulstan at Worcester, Robert at Hereford, Herbert at Norwich, St. Anselm at Chester, Roger at Sarum; in short, by almost every prelate of every then existing cathedral in England. The abbots would not be outdone by the bishops; accordingly, far the greater part of the rich and ample monasteries, such as St. Augustine's at Canterbury, St. Alban's, Evesham, Glastonbury, Malmesbury, Ely, St. Edmundsbury, &c., were rebuilt in the whole, or in a considerable part of them, with a zeal and an emulation in their builders, which had never before been equalled in any age or country of the world."—Milner, pp. 43 and 44.

^(b) "The dimensions of their structures were, in general, much larger than those of the Saxons had been. For example, the celebrated Abbey Church of Abingdon was only one hundred and twenty feet long; whereas the magnificent Normans were not satisfied, either in their cathedral or grand abbatial churches, with a length of less than from three to five hundred feet."—Milner, p. 47.

spirit of progressive emulation,—improvements considered so remarkable in their day as to merit the appellation of a new style of building,—it must be observed, that the distinguishing characteristics of this style present no strongly marked or striking difference from those of the preceding. In both styles, the Saxon and early Norman, the massive circular arch and column constitute the essential features; and even the Norman arcade itself, the favourite decoration of this age, is only a multiplication of the circular arch, an indefinite number of single arches being simply combined or intersected according to the taste of the builder.

From the unwearied efforts of these architects, constantly aiming at a higher degree of excellence, before the middle of the twelfth century, a singular change was produced in architecture, and one which exercised a mighty influence over the future destinies of the art. This was the introduction of the *pointed arch*, which immediately, from the period of its first appearance, began gradually to supersede the heavy semicircular one, so that by the close of the same century the latter mode was entirely discontinued. It is supposed by some, and not without a strong appearance of probability, that the pointed arch derived its origin from the circular intersections in the Norman arcade, the characteristic mural ornament of that style. Thus constructed, it appeared at first in basso-relievo, as on the north side of Durham Cathedral, and on the façade of the church at Lincoln; but it was soon likewise seen in alto-relievo, as in the remains of Archbishop's Lanfranc's work in Canterbury Cathedral, and in the abbey churches of Glastonbury and Ramsey. One of the earliest specimens of the open pointed arch occurs in the church of St. Cross, near Winchester, built by the munificent prelate of that see, Henry de Blois, King Stephen's brother, and previously Abbot of Glastonbury.^(a)

The Norman style, dating from the Confessor's church, at Westminster, A.D. 1065, prevailed in its pure state till the introduction of the pointed arch, with which it subsequently became so blended and intermingled, both in its characteristic form and peculiar features, that it assumed a mixed character. In this transition state, almost constituting a distinct style,^(b) it continued to the close of the twelfth century.

The early Norman buildings are remarkable for their general massiveness and plain appearance; but, at a later period, they are found enriched with a profusion of ornamental mouldings surrounding the heads of the doorways and windows. Of these, the favourite and most frequent

^(a) Milner supports this view of the case by the above-cited illustrations, p. 80.

^(b) Mr. Bloxam treats this as a distinct style, under the title of the Semi-Norman style.

decoration is the chevron, or zigzag moulding, and next to this the beak-head. In both of these mouldings, the consecutive series of minute projecting angular points form a grateful relief to the solid rotundity of the arch in which they repose. A variety of other mouldings also occur, as the lozenge, the star, the nailhead, the cable, the billet, the stud, the double cone, the embattled frette, and the medallion, all of which, together with the corbel-table, are characteristic of this style.^(a) The capitals of piers and shafts were frequently ornamented with grotesque devices of animals and rude foliage.

The doorways of this style are remarkable for their depth and richness, being frequently composed of a succession of receding semicircular arches, forming one entire grand arch of entrance. In consequence of a singular custom prevailing with the architects who succeeded the Normans, many of these ancient doorways have been preserved, when every other vestige of the church coeval with it has long since disappeared, and the site occupied by a structure of a later style. It may be, these were so preserved from a feeling of reverence for the original founder, and a laudable desire to retain some memorial of his piety; or perhaps they spared the venerable portal, when they remembered it was beneath its time-worn brow that their fathers, then mouldering around, had so frequently passed into the consecrated house of prayer and praise.

Examples of the Norman style, in its pure state, exist in the undercroft of Canterbury Cathedral, the work of Archbishop Lanfranc, between A. D. 1073 and 1080; in the crypt and transepts of Winchester Cathedral, built by Bishop Walkelyn, between A. D. 1079 and 1093; in the Abbey Church of St. Albans, built by Abbot Paul, between A. D. 1077 and 1093; also in the north and south aisles of the choir of Norwich Cathedral, the work of Bishop Herber, between A. D. 1096 and 1101. In the transepts of Peterborough Cathedral, built by Abbot Waterville, between A. D. 1155 and 1175, and in the Galilee Durham Cathedral, built by Bishop Pudsey, A. D. 1180, we perceive a considerable advance in the use of mouldings and other ornamental details. The latter is remarkable for a loftiness and lightness of construction, that strikingly contrast with the extremely massive character of an earlier date.^(b)

Examples of the Norman style, in its mixed or transition state, exist in

^(a) For all these varieties, with the names of the churches in which they are found, see Bloxam, plates, pp. 82, 87.

^(b) Bloxam, p. 91.

the Church of the Hospital of St. Cross,^(a) founded A. D. 1132 or 1136, in the remains of Buildwas Abbey Church, Salop, erected between 1136 and 1139, and in those of the abbey churches of Malmsbury and Fountains, Yorkshire. A Beautiful example exists also in a portion of the west front of the ruined abbey church of Croyland, Lincolnshire, consisting of four tiers of the ornamental Norman arcade, ranged in diversified succession one above the other.

But of this style, St. Joseph's Chapel,^(b) Glastonbury, now in ruins, supposed to have been erected in the reign of Henry I., is, perhaps, the richest specimen remaining, and is remarkable for the profusion and beauty of its sculptured detail.

The ancient Temple Church, dedicated A. D. 1185, presents a curious instance of this style. Here we behold piers, composed of four clustered columns, and approaching closely to those of the next style, supporting pointed arches, over which is carried the circular intersecting arcade, and above this again, the old round-headed Norman window.

A valuable illustration of the progress of improvement, during the reign of the Norman style, occurs in the eastern part of Canterbury Cathedral, consisting of Trinity Chapel, and the circular adjunct, called "Becket's Crown." These were commenced building in A. D. 1175, after a calamitous fire, which had destroyed the east end of the choir, in the preceding year. Of this restoration, Gervase, a monk of Canterbury, and himself an eye-witness, has left a long and circumstantial account. His comparison of many of the features of the new structure with those of the former one, raised about a hundred years previously by Archbishop Lanfranc, is so curious as to deserve notice. He says that the pillars of the new choir were of the same form and thickness with those of the old choir, but nearly twelve feet longer; that the former capitals were plain, while the latter were delicately carved; that there were no marble columns in Lanfranc's work, but an incredible number in that which succeeded it; that the vaulting of the side aisles of the choir was formerly plain, but now groined and fixed with key-stones; that the old choir was covered with a ceiling of wood, ornamentally painted; while the new one was elegantly arched with hard stone for its ribs, and light top stone for the interstices; finally, that

(a) "The date of this work is A. D. 1132, according to Godwin, Grose, and others; or else 1136, according to Bishop Louth, who had examined the records of this foundation, and Rudborne, the monk of Winchester, in his 'Historia Major. Wintoniensis.'"—Milner, p. 82 (in a note).

(b) "Abbot Herlewin, who died in A. D. 1120, began to rebuild the whole of Glastonbury Abbey, as Malmsbury informs us ('De Antiquit. Glaston. Eccl.'). Six years after this date, Henry de Blois became abbot of it. Hence it is not unlikely that the intermixed pointed and circular work (cf St. Joseph's Chapel) was executed under his directions."—Milner, p. 81 (in a note).

there was only one triforium, or gallery, round the ancient choir, while there were two in the modern one. With this description of the intelligent monk, recorded nearly 700 years since, the present appearance of the east end of this venerable cathedral exactly corresponds.^(a)

The commencement of the thirteenth century is celebrated in the annals of ecclesiastical architecture as the era of a new style, possessing the intrinsic merit of entire originality, and founded on principles peculiar to itself. The *pointed arch*, having now established its ascendancy, came forth, as it were, from the prison-house of Norman bondage; and, claiming unrivalled homage, demanded a support more congenial to its aspiring character and lofty pretensions. Accordingly, the massive semicircular column, on which it had hitherto rested, was exchanged for the slender pillar of Purbeck marble, surrounded with marble shafts a little detached; and these shafts, encircled with horizontal bands, were each crowned with a foliated capital, which, clustering together, formed one rich capital for the entire pillar. The windows, at the same time, were constructed long, narrow, and lancet-headed; two of these being frequently united under a single pointed arch of larger dimensions, and the space between the heads ornamented with a trefoil, quatrefoil, rose, or other similar decoration. In the upper story, three lancet windows were placed together, the head of the central light being gracefully elevated above those of the adjoining one on each side. These windows were also ornamented with very long and slender marble shafts detached. In the closely connected series of windows in the transept of the Abbey Church at Westminster, each separate, yet all comprised under a general dripstone, we perceive the first approach to that division of the entire window by mullions which subsequently prevailed. The doorways of this style, all pointed, were frequently as finely recessed as those of the Norman, and contained a greater number of bands and shafts; the architrave mouldings being enriched with the tooth ornament peculiar to this style, and occasionally with open-work flowers. In the sculptured foliage of this

^(a) "Dictum est in superioribus quod post combustionem illam vetera fere omnia chori diruta sunt, et in quandam augustioris formæ transierunt novitatem. Nunc autem quæ sit operis utriusque differentia dicendum est. Pilariorum igitur tam veteranum quam novorum una forma est, una et grossitudo, sed longitudo dissimilis. Elongati sunt enim pilarii novi longitudine pedum fere duodecim. In capitellis veteribus opus erat planum, in novis sculptura subtilis. Ibi in chori ambitu pilarii viginti duo, hic autem viginti octo. Ibi arcus et cætera omnia plana utpote sculpta secure et non seisello, hic in omnibus fere sculptura idœa. Ibi columpna nulla marmorea, hic innumera. Ibi in circuitu extra chorum fornices planæ, hic arcuatae sunt et clavatae. Ibi murus super pilarios directus crucæ a choro sequestrabat, hic vero nullo intersticio crucæ a choro divise in unam clavem quæ in medio fornici magnæ consistit, quæ quatuor pilariis principalibus inimititur, convenire videntur. Ibi cœlum lignæ egregia pietura decoratum, hic fornix ex lapide et tofo levè decenter composita est. Ibi triforium nūnum, hic duo in choro, et in ala ecclesiæ terrium."—*De Combust et Re ar. Cant. Ecclesiæ.*

age, a remarkable stiffness predominates in the composition, contrasted with the flexible character and more natural forms exhibited at a later period. In some of the large churches double doorways were introduced with a very fine effect, among which may be instanced the grand western portals of Salisbury and Wells Cathedrals. Finally, with regard to the remaining principal improvements developed in this style, it may be remarked that the vaultings were constructed with a greater degree of lightness and elegance, and the pediment or canopy, which hitherto had simply covered the arch, now rose to a considerable height above it.

In A.D. 1195, the rebuilding of Lincoln Cathedral was commenced, under the direction of its bishop, St. Hugh, who was so intent upon the work that, as Matthew Paris informs us, he carried mortar and stones on his own shoulders for the use of the masons.^(a) This zealous prelate dying A.D. 1200, the work was not entirely finished till about fifty years afterwards, in the episcopacy of Robert Grossetete. With the exception of the west front, erected by the Norman bishop, Remigius, the towers, the groining, the screens, and certain other decorations added in the fourteenth century, this entire cathedral and chapter-house are in the simple and beautiful early Pointed style.

In A.D. 1202, Worcester Cathedral, having sustained considerable injury from a fire, was restored in its choir after the style of Lincoln; it was dedicated A.D. 1218.

In the same style also, and probably of the same date, with the exception of the western and eastern façades, is Beverley Minster.

In A.D. 1202, the wealthy prelate, Godfrey de Luey, began to rebuild the eastern part of his cathedral at Winchester, in the style of the choir of Canterbury Cathedral, and this extensive work is visible at the present day.

In A.D. 1227, Archbishop Walter de Grey began to rebuild York Cathedral in the prevailing style, and completed the south cross-aisle, as it is now seen.

Between A.D. 1214 and A.D. 1242, the west front of Wells Cathedral was erected by the munificent prelate Joceline. As a monument of the sculpture of the thirteenth century, before the revival of the arts in Italy, it is, probably, unrivalled by any similar production in Europe.^(b)

^(a) Matt. Paris, ad ann. 1200.

^(b) The west front of this cathedral displays a grand series of scriptural and historical subjects, all crowned with a sublime representation of the Resurrection—the archangels sounding the last trump—the tombs giving up their dead—the Saviour enthroned in judgment, attended by angels and the twelve apostles. For a description of the historical subjects, see Mr. Cockerell's letter in the *Athenaeum*, Dec. 1842, No. 789.

The late eminent sculptor Mr. Flaxman in his lectures bestows high commendation on the beautiful compositions, and bold but graceful sculpture of this front.

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In A.D. 1234, Hugh Norwold, Bishop of Ely, took down the circular east end of the church, and laid the foundation of his new building, now called the Presbytery, which he finished A.D. 1250.

In A.D. 1245, King Henry III. ordered the east end, tower, and transept of the Abbey Church at Westminster, built by Edward the Confessor, to be taken down, and rebuilt in a more elegant form. The north transept and part of the adjoining nave of the church remain in almost the same state in which he left them.

But the finest specimen of this style, as an entire structure, and which may be justly accounted one of the best patterns of architecture in the age wherein it was built,^(a) exists in Salisbury Cathedral, begun by Bishop De Poore in A.D. 1220, and finished by Bishop Bridport in A.D. 1258. This cathedral possessed one great advantage over all others, that it was an entirely new foundation: thus the original design, once adopted, was steadily adhered to throughout the whole progress of the work; hence the beautiful order, correct symmetry, and regular proportion that reign over every part of this unique pile.

During the reign of Edward I., son of Henry III., ecclesiastical architecture acquired a new character. Then arose that spirit of ornamental grandeur, which breathed an air of gorgeous magnificence over the creations of architectural genius. In the sumptuous and stately edifices of this and the succeeding age we behold the highest purity of design enriched by the greatest splendour of decoration; and yet these ornaments—though frequently in themselves exceedingly rich, and introduced to profusion—are so skilfully disposed, that they neither weary the eye by an excessive extravagance, nor impair the distinctness of the original composition. Hence this is generally denominated the *Decorated* style. The sharp lancet arch of the preceding age was superseded by the graceful equilateral, ornamented in the head with cusps, so as to form trefoils, cinquefoils, and septfoils. The pediments over the arches were purfled, that is, adorned with foliage, called crockets, from the corbel on which they rested up to the elegant finial in which they terminated. Pinnacles richly purfled, and crowned with finials, adorned the summit of nearly every buttress and the sides of every arch. The spandrels also of ornamental arches were filled with beautiful foliage.^(b) The columns no longer appeared with their surrounding shafts detached, but displayed those decorations closely united and bound together, forming one entire, compact, and elegant column. The windows, hitherto consisting of an arch divided by a simple mullion, and surmounted with a trefoil or

^a Wren's "Parentalia."

^b As in the church at Ely, formerly the Lady chapel of the cathedral.

single rose, were considerably enlarged, and portioned by mullions into numerous lights; these mullions branching into tracery, moulded into forms of exact geometrical construction, or wrought by flowing lines into a variety of fanciful figures.^(a) Thus the west windows of York and Exeter Cathedrals are of eight and nine lights each, and are probably the largest windows remaining. The head of that at York is constructed in the form of a beautiful flower. The plain niches of the thirteenth century became, in the fourteenth, gorgeous tabernacles; and these were filled with statuary, which, both in the design and execution, displayed an admirable advancement in the art of sculpture. The vaulting of the roof, hitherto composed of simple intersecting arches, was now highly decorated; the ribs branching out into a profusion of rich and varied tracery, more splendid even than that displayed in the magnificent windows of the same period, and the points of union where they met adorned with knots and bosses of elaborate sculpture. During this period many fine towers and spires were erected,^(b) and in some instances spires were added to towers already existing. Buttresses, crowned with lofty pinnacles, flanked the towers of new churches, and the flying buttress was called forth from its concealment in the roof of the side aisles, to form an ornamental support to the upper walls of the nave.

As Salisbury presents a perfect model of the purity and elegance of the preceding style, so York displays the most complete specimen of all the beauties of the present. For grandeur and simplicity of design, her minster is incomparably superior to the cathedrals of this or any other age. Over every part of the august pile ornament is liberally bestowed, yet, still only as an accessory, to heighten and enhance the original architectural design. The nave of this church, as it now stands, was built between the years A.D. 1290 and A.D. 1330, and the choir about thirty years later than the last-named period.

About A.D. 1320, Bishop Langton added the Lady Chapel to his cathedral of Lichfield, groined the nave and choir, and added the magnificent western façade.^(c)

About the same period the greater part of the nave of Westminster Abbey Church was rebuilt.

^(a) Of these two descriptions of decorated window tracery, the geometrical—composed of circles, trefoils, and quatrefoils—is the oldest. Such are the windows in the nave of York and the eastern choir of Lincoln; such also the majority of the windows in Exeter Cathedral, which contains as rich a variety of windows as any cathedral in England. Of flowing tracery—the most beautiful and distinctive feature of the Decorated style—the minsters of York and Beverley and Newark church display elaborate and exquisite examples.

^(b) Among these may be particularly remarked the spire of Grantham church, Lincolnshire, and the tower and spire of St. Michael's, Coventry.

^(c) Thomas de Chesterfield "Ang. Sacr." et Godwin "De Præsul."

Between A.D. 1327 and 1360, Exeter Cathedral was groined, and the heavy circular arches and pillars transformed into light pointed arches and clustered columns, by its munificent prelate Grandison.^(a)

Between A.D. 1381 and 1413, the former being the period of the installation of Archbishop Courtney, and the latter that of the demise of his successor, Archbishop Arundel, the nave of Canterbury Cathedral was rebuilt.^(a)

During the same period, Winchester Cathedral arose in the pointed style, under the transforming hand of the celebrated William de Wykeham, who re-constructed its nave on the same principles as those so successfully applied at Exeter. The massive Norman pillars and arches were not taken down, but the former were enclosed with an appropriate casing, and the latter exchanged the circular for the pointed head.

The remains of Melrose Abbey (founded by King David, A.D. 1136), abound in beauties of the Decorated style, and display exceeding richness, variety, and precision in the sculptured details.

But one of the most exquisite specimens of this style, and a perfect architectural gem, existed in St. Stephen's Chapel, the late House of Commons, erected by Edward III. in A.D. 1348.

The monumental crosses at Northampton, Geddington, and Waltham, erected by Edward I. to the memory of his queen, Eleanor, who died A.D. 1290, as also the magnificent tomb of his brother, Edmund Crouchback, in Westminster, who died A.D. 1296, present elaborate illustrations of this style.

But human arts, like human genius, are liable to declension and decay. Like the fairest summer fruits, they have their spring-time and their rottenness. Even so with this sublime art of sacred architecture. We have traced it like some noble tree, springing from the Saxon soil of our ancestors, fostered with Norman culture; and, under the benignant tutelage of princes, prelates, and pious dignitaries, expanding its branches over all the land; putting forth rich blossoms, and bearing richer fruit—the earth luxuriating in its shade, and the heaven regaled with its fragrance—until at length, in the fulness of years and glory, it fell, crushed beneath the costly load of its own exuberant and o'ercharged perfections. The purity and simplicity, that breathed such an air of reverence and devout majesty over the earlier creations of the art, had now entirely disappeared. The awful character of the sublime fell before the magic fascinations of the beautiful. Grandeur of conception and correctness of design were sacrificed to the

^a Godwin "De Praesul."

^b Ibid.

inordinate passion for decorative display. Hence the prodigal luxuriance of ornament that prevailed, even to satiety; and these ornaments were frequently so incorporated with the main building as to form essential parts of the structure itself, instead of occupying their proper and subordinate position as accessories to heighten and enrich the original design. Hence also the fatiguing repetition of minute details, and the interminable series of panelling. To such an extent was the use of this last ornament carried, that the interiors of most rich buildings were literally covered with it—even the doors and windows were nothing but pierced panels, and the very roof^(a) reflected the same idea, only in different forms. The flowing lines that imparted so much gracefulness to the rich tracery of the preceding style, were now superseded by straight perpendicular lines; from the perpetual recurrence of which, this is generally denominated the Perpendicular style, or, in reference to the extreme profuseness of its ornament, the Florid. The windows of this period were enlarged beyond all due proportion, in the late buildings completely filling up the spaces between the buttresses, and the east and west windows frequently occupied the entire breadth of the choir and nave. In all of these the horizontal transom was now generally introduced, and occasionally ornamented with small battlements. The doorways, shorn of their aspiring pediments and purfled buttresses, were now inclosed within large square architraves, the principal ornament of which appeared in the spandrels.

But it was chiefly in the elaborate construction of the splendid roofs of this age, that the ingenuity of the architect was most conspicuous, and on these he seems at once both to have lavished and concentrated all the powers of his art. The eye of astonishment was bewildered to behold enormous masses of stone, called pendent capitals, suspended in mid-air, and instead of supporting the immense groins in which they were fixed, supported by them. The tracery also of this vaulting, in some instances was multiplied into so many minute ramifications, and so overloaded at the points of intersection with knots, bosses, and armorial bearings, that the beauty of the design was entirely destroyed, and an air of heaviness and obscurity imparted to the whole. "Finally, ingenuity more than sublimity was now affected, and curiosity more than devotion gratified. Thus, the royal chapels and mortuary oratories, built in the reigns of the last two Henrys, are seen covered over with tracery and other carvings of the most exquisite design and

^(a) "The vaulted roofs of this style are more complicated in detail than those of earlier date, and in plain vaulting, as distinguished from fan tracery, the groining ribs are more numerous; they often diverge at different angles, forming geometrically shaped panels or compartments."—Bloxam's Gothic Architecture, p. 196.

exemption, but which fatigue the eye and cloy the mind by their redundancy. Hence, the judicious critic, after admiring their ingenuity, fails not to sigh for the chaste grandeur of York Minster, or even for the unadorned majesty of Salisbury Cathedral, instead of them.^(a) The prevailing arch of this style was the obtuse, four-centred, or Tudor arch, and the mouldings, springing from the base, frequently surrounded the entire arch, without any capital intervening—sometimes a single shaft and capital were introduced, the other lines flowing without interruption. The chief source of ornament consisted of panel-work, which, as before observed, was carried to an unbounded extent, completely covering, with its uniform tracery, the interior of some buildings, and the exterior of others. Thus of the former, Sherborne Church, Dorsetshire, and of the latter, Beaneham Chapel, Warwick, and the west front of Winchester Cathedral, are examples. The exterior also of many towers, as the Abbot's Tower, Evesham, and that of St. Neot's Church, Huntingdon, was similarly ornamented. In the two last-mentioned instances, the panel-work tracery extended even to the faces of the external buttresses. In decorative detail the panelled or sunk quatrefoil was a favourite ornament, being frequently formed into rich bands^(b) surrounding, at successive stages, the body of the structure, or introduced as pierced panelling into the embattled parapet. The rose,^(c) adorning the spandrels of arches, and the Tudor flower,—the latter composed of a series of strawberry leaves, with alternate trefoils intermingled, and forming a most beautiful enriched battlement,—together with the angel corbel, were ornaments peculiar to this period.

Of this style, and illustrative of its latest character, the extreme Florid, to which the preceding observations more particularly apply, the most splendid examples are King's College Chapel, Cambridge,^(d) founded by King Henry VI.; St. George's Chapel, Windsor, founded by King Edward IV.; and the Lady Chapel of Westminster Abbey, generally called Henry VII.'s Chapel, founded by that monarch. These three celebrated structures were finished about the same period; and the same noble architect,^(e) who

^a Milner, p. 114.

^b Thus the tower of St. Mary Magdalene's Church, Taunton. Thus also the tower of the parish church at Huish Episcopi, near Langport.

^c The well known badge of the houses of York and Lancaster, differing only in colour.

^d "In the will of King Henry VI., dated A.D. 1447, we find specific directions given for the size and arrangement of King's College Chapel, Cambridge; and no less than five different indentures are preserved (the earliest dated A.D. 1513, the latest A.D. 1527), containing contracts for the execution of different parts of that celebrated structure. The will of King Henry VII., dated A.D. 1509, contains several orders and directions relating to the completion of the splendid chapel adjoining the Abbey Church, Westminster."—Bloxam, p. 211.

^e Sir Reginald de Bray, prime minister to Henry VII.

designed the chapel at Westminster, was also entrusted with the completion of that at Windsor.

It is remarkable of these chapels that they bear a striking affinity to each other, but are at the same time in many respects totally different. Of the same elaborate construction are the chapels of Prince Arthur at Worcester, of Cardinal Beaufort and the Bishops Waynflete and Fox at Winchester. Of this style also are many buildings in the finest preservation; and among the counties of England, Somersetshire^(a) stands pre-eminent for the number and beauty of her parochial edifices erected during this age. As the early Pointed and Decorated may be respectively considered the prevailing styles of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, so the Florid or Perpendicular may be designated that of the fifteenth and early part of the sixteenth centuries.

The suppression of the monasteries, attended with the confiscation of their revenues and the destruction of their churches, completed the downfall of ecclesiastical architecture. Yet, however opposed to the spirit of the present day, monastic institutions have not been altogether unblest.^(b) In the earliest times, they were the heralds and harbingers of civilisation, and throughout the long Gothic night that overspread Europe, they were the repositories of literature and science—the sanctuaries of the precious oracles of Divine truth. Finally, they were the grand almoners of Heaven's bounty—not doling out the miserable pittance of cold charity from man to man, but dispensing the freewill offerings of the Church—the noble treasures of consecrated munificence—to the children of affliction, adversity, and sorrow; blending oblations with their prayers, and binding up the broken-hearted in the spirit of love.

(a) "Most of the churches in Somersetshire (which are remarkably elegant) are in the style of the *Florid Gothic*. The reason is this:—Somersetshire, in the civil wars between York and Lancaster, was strongly and entirely attached to the Lancastrian party. In reward for this service, Henry VII., when he came to the crown, rebuilt their churches. The tower of Gloucester Cathedral, and the towers of the churches of Taunton and Glastonbury, and of a parochial church (St. Cuthbert's) at Wells, are conspicuous examples of that fashion. Most of the churches of this reign are known, besides other distinctions, by latticed battlements and broad open windows."—Warton, Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, vol. ii. p. 259.

(b) "The names of Iona and of Lindisfarn will be illustrious, to the end of time, as sanctuaries of learning and of piety. The one was a solitary and barren rock in the Western Ocean; the other an obscure island at the mouth of the Tees. And yet, from these insignificant spots it was, that the lights of literature and religion were seen to issue forth into the thick darkness which enveloped the northern regions of our empire. Such was the ardour of study, and such the holy rigour of discipline, which distinguished the monks of Iona, that their habitation was honoured as an island of saints, and their episcopal jurisdiction acknowledged over all the northern parts of Britain and of Ireland. Of Lindisfarn, what more need be said, than that it fostered the virtues and the industry of the venerable Bede, and was the scene of his vast and immortal labours?"—Le Bas' *Life of Wielif*, Introduction, p. 51.

The ruin of ecclesiastical architecture being thus completed by the devastation of the monasteries, a mixed and barbarous style succeeded, arising, in a great measure, from the introduction of semi-classic details from Italy in the sixteenth century, as the monumental tombs and other works of that age abundantly testify. Purity and propriety were alike discarded, and an incongruous mixture of debased English and Roman architecture prevailed, until at length every true feature of the ancient ecclesiastical styles was obliterated, and every real principle of the art neglected or forgotten.

It is gratifying, however, to record that, within the last few years, a better taste has begun to display itself. After the lapse of three centuries, the spirit of ancient art has revived; and the principles upon which that art was founded, are now more perfectly understood. Thus a new era has dawned upon the destinies of Christian architecture, and a mighty impulse has been given to the study of its venerable antiquities. Under the enlightened influence and happy auspices of the Camden,^(a) in connection with other societies, and aided by the labours and genius of distinguished architects, what may not be expected?

Is it too much to hope that a school may yet arise, whose productions shall rival the glories of that Augustan age of ecclesiastical architecture—the fourteenth century? What has been once may be again. It is a glorious and consoling thought, that the energies of human intellect, although liable to declension and decay, are also equally capable of re-invigoration and replenishment. Imperishable in its nature, and allied to the infinite, may it not hope to receive new and perpetual supplies from the inexhausted fountain of all perfection. With immortality for her birth-right, how can Genius ever die? And when consecrating her best powers to the service of the King of kings, and laying her richest trophies at the foot of the Cross, is it possible that “Ichabod” shall be ever written on her brow?

^(a) These remarks were written in the spring of 1844. Since that period this society, so bright in promise, has suspended for a time its antiquarian labours.



Appendix.

HAVING given a brief history of the rise, progress, and decline of Ecclesiastical Architecture in this country, it has been thought desirable to add a few observations on the term "Gothic," so frequently, yet so improperly, applied to this mode of building. In order, however, to preserve a correct idea on the subject, it must be borne in mind that the architecture in question consists of two grand divisions,—the one characterised by extreme massiveness, solidity, and plainness—the other by excessive lightness, delicacy, and ultimately profusion of ornament; that the former of these, comprising the Saxon and Early Norman styles, prevailed until the introduction of the Pointed style, which latter terminated in the rich varieties of the Decorated and Florid; and that the Saxon was founded upon the debased Roman, and copied, even in its minutest members, from Roman originals. If, then, to either of these divisions the term "Gothic" could possibly apply, it must be intended for that more ancient one, derived from Rome during the period that the Goths held possession of Italy, that is, in the Gothic age. Hence, upon this hypothesis the term "Modern Gothic" has been applied to the latter division.

But it will appear, upon a closer examination of the subject, that both of these terms are manifestly incorrect, for during the brief period the Goths maintained their power in Italy, this country held no communication with Rome, and they left no structures behind them which could serve as models for any future style of architecture. Moreover, the Goths are not celebrated in history for the least invention or improvement they were ever known to achieve in art or science. Indeed, the only art which they condescended to cultivate, and which they assiduously practised, if it may be so termed, was the art of destruction, and in this they succeeded *beyond* admiration. In fine their commission extended solely to destroy, not to create, and this injunction they fully executed, with most religious fidelity, both in the letter and the spirit.

Of an equally ferocious and unlettered character were the Northern Goths, who invaded Spain A.D. 409, and yet it is to those barbarians "with the assistance of Saracen architects," that Bishop Warburton ascribes the invention of the light, luxuriant Pointed style (the second chief division), and assumes that the idea was borrowed from the groves, in which their

pagan forefathers were accustomed to worship. But these Northern invaders were driven out of the Peninsula A.D. 713, and this style did not appear in any part of Europe until 400 years afterwards. Moreover, the resemblance between a cathedral aisle and the vista through an avenue of trees is purely fanciful, and founded upon no geometrical principles. Doubtless, the idea of a pillar was originally derived from the trunk of a tree; but this is more applicable to the simple pillar in a Grecian temple than the cluster column of a Christian cathedral.

Sir Christopher Wren says,—“What we now vulgarly call the Gothic, ought properly and truly to be named Saracenic architecture, refined by the Christians, which first of all began in the East, after the fall of the Greek empire. The holy war gave the Christians who had been there an idea of the Saracen works, which were afterwards imitated by them in the West.” Thus this eminent architect attributes the origin of the Pointed style to the Saracens, and supposes it to have been imported into this country during the Crusades, but he produces no evidence in support of this opinion.

That the light Pointed style was not introduced by those who returned from the first or grand crusade, A.D. 1099, is proved by the fact that the old massive Circular style continued to prevail, both in cathedrals and abbey churches, after that period. Of this, the cathedrals of Exeter, Rochester, and Chichester, built in the latter style, furnish the most incontestable evidence.

Moreover, among all the ancient structures of the East, open to the survey of the traveller, and many have been most accurately delineated, no indication has yet been discovered in the least degree favourable to this hypothesis, neither has any resemblance been traced between Saracenic and Pointed Architecture.

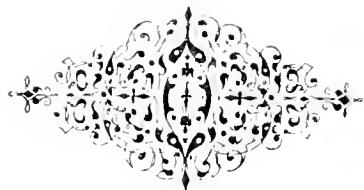
Ascending, however, from *names* to *things*—from the fictions of fancy to the investigation of truth—a point of higher interest stands connected with this subject, which, although it has frequently attracted the attention both of antiquaries and architects, has hitherto failed to receive a satisfactory elucidation. This refers to the *exact period* of the first appearance of the *pointed arch*, as existing in a separate and independent form, emancipated from the trammels of Norman captivity, and becoming intrinsically the parent germ of Pointed Architecture. Dr. Milner attributes the discovery of the Pointed arch to Henry de Blois, and instances the church of St. Cross as furnishing the earliest example of its appearance. His words are:—^(a) “It is probable that the first open pointed arches in Europe were

the twenty windows constructed by that great patron of Architecture, Henry de Blois, brother of King Stephen, and Bishop of Winchester, in the choir of the church of St. Cross, near that city, which structure he certainly raised between the years 1132 and 1136."

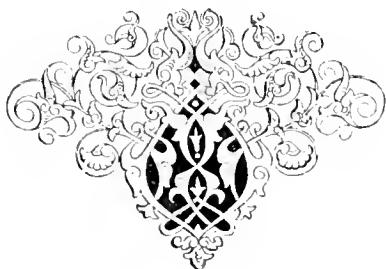
Previously, however, to either of these periods, and to his elevation to the see of Winchester, Henry de Blois had been appointed Abbot of Glastonbury, and during his presideney had made considerable additions to the buildings of that monastery. Now it is a singular fact, that in the walls of a Norman chapel, still existing there in ruins, and attributed to him, which was evidently an enlargement of the more ancient Norman chapel erected by his predecessor, Abbot Herlewin, are clearly visible the remains of wide and lofty open pointed arches, designed for windows; but which appear to have been originally struck out on so vast and incongruous a scale, in comparison with the uniform and harmonious proportions of the windows in the older structure with which it was incorporated, that these arches were subsequently reduced by the insertion of new masonry at the sides to more appropriate dimensions, but still retained the pointed head. Hence it may be fairly inferred, from the faulty and unskilful construction of these windows, that the use of the pointed arch was at this period but imperfectly understood in its application to perforated masonry, if, indeed, this were not in itself an entirely novel attempt at its introduction. Moreover, if this chapel ascribed to Henry de Blois was built by him before his promotion to Winchester, it is evident that these pointed arches must be older than those in the church of St. Cross, designated by Milner as "probably the oldest in Europe."

If the foregoing observations should be considered to throw any new light upon the point in question, it is hoped that these grounds will be examined, and the hypothesis, if founded on truth, receive the sanction of authority. For our own part, we have endeavoured to approach the subject in a spirit of cautious yet candid inquiry; and far from indulging in rash assertion or unwarrantable presumption, are content to leave it still a problem—but yet a problem whose solution may be nearer at hand than has been heretofore conceived.

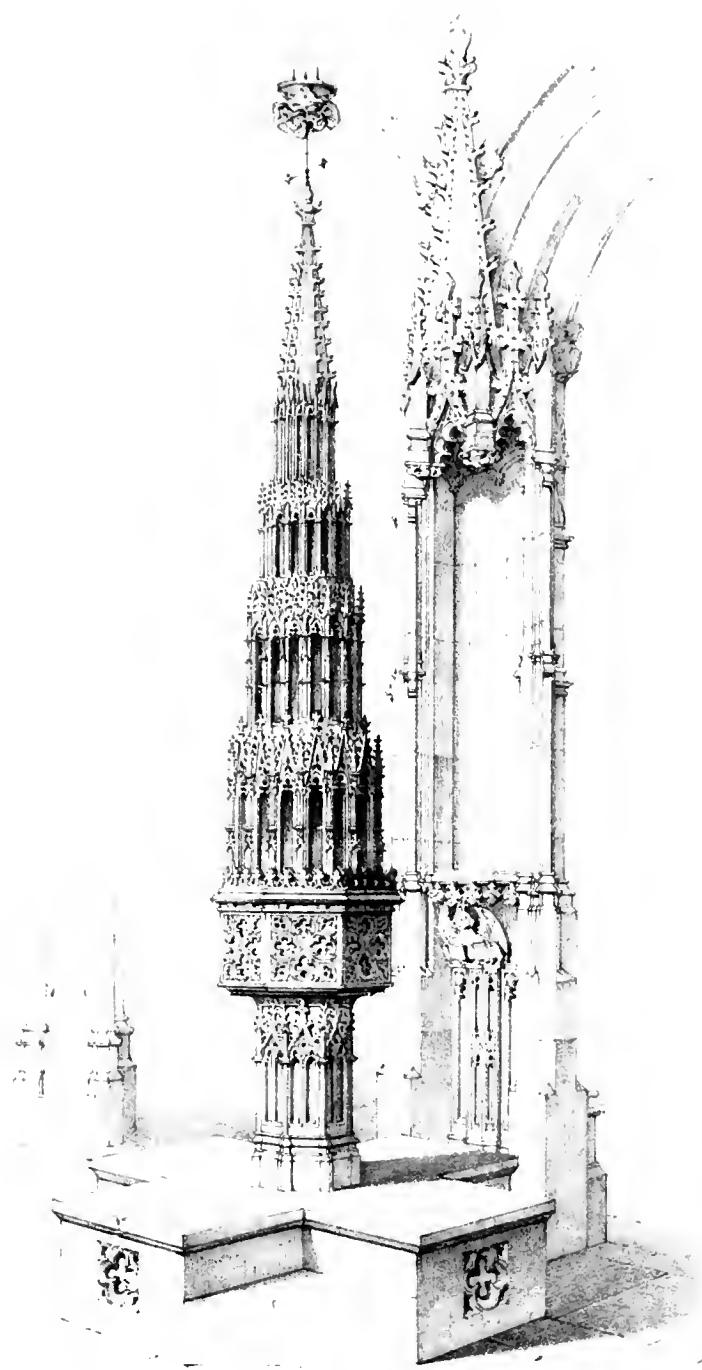
It now only remains for the writer of the foregoing chapter to crown this labour of love, by the expression of his most grateful acknowledgments for the assistance he has derived from the pages of Milner and Bentham, whose invaluable treatises on Ecclesiastical Architecture, have laid all true lovers of the sacred art under the deepest and most lasting obligations.



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HE spectator who should be introduced into a Quakers' meeting-house, after having witnessed the rich and solemn adornments of a well-appointed cathedral church, might be well pardoned the supposition that he was in the temple of a different worship, and one the principles of which were greatly at variance with that whose sanctuary he had just left. The grand and dignified proportions; the "dim religious light" streaming in through the "storied windows," hallowed by the pictured martyrdom of Evangelist and Apostle; the clear but deep notes of the organ, pealing along the almost boundless extent of vaulted arches; the exquisite tracery of roof and cloister; the clustered pillars shooting up in the twilight of the clerestory, and then expanding into fan-like foliage, so far over head that the eye aches with the upward gaze; the magnificent altar, with its illuminated tablets and its costly plate; the beautifully sculptured screens and pulpits and sedilia; the statues of saints and cherubs, now canopied in carved niches, now smiling or frowning from frieze and pillar; the floor paved with marble in quaint devices, interspersed with still quainter brasses; the monuments, some-

times simple and sometimes sublime, of the mighty dead; all, in fact, that makes worship sensuous, without making it sensual, have disappeared; the link that bound, as it were, the soul and the body in one act of devotion is snapped, and an attempt is made to establish a purely spiritual worship, in which the senses are to have no share. The machinery, if we may use the term, by which such attempt is made, is worthy of our notice; and the Society of Friends, to which we have already alluded, have, as far as practicable, consistently carried out their design. It is to be seen in the studiously plain, unadorned structure in which they meet in their silent and contemplative worship, and the mystic quietism which distinguishes their creed. Hence, then, we have two totally distinct systems of worship; the one which regards spirit alone, and the other which attempts to influence the spirit by means of the senses: the one which attempts to purify the devotion, by abstracting it from all earthly objects; the other, which hallows earthly objects, by regarding them in a symbolical point of view, gathering them within the sphere, and making them accessory to the strength of its devotion. Hence the consecration of the fine as well as the useful arts, Painting, Poetry, Sculpture, Music, as well as Architecture, to the service of religion; and hence the renunciation, more or less complete, of similar aids to devotion on the part of Dissenters.

The observer of our older churches cannot but observe that there still exist many features therein, of which he cannot at once discover the use; he sees that, according to our modern system of worship, they are certainly of no use; and if he be possessed with a love of what churchwardens call beautification, he may, perhaps, wish them removed or bricked-up, covered with lath-and-plaster, stucco, Roman-cement, whitewash, or something else equally abominable. Perhaps he may be a "zealous Protestant," and identify everything in an old church, which he does not comprehend, with idolatry and the Inquisition, and the council of Trent, and the burning of Ridley, and the creed of Pope Pius IV. But possibly he may be an inquirer into antiquity, he may desire to know the meaning of the now obsolete features, and at what period of the Christian church they were introduced, and as the answers to such inquiries will tend to throw a strong light on the spirit as well as on the form of our more ancient worship, we shall endeavour to throw together, in a small compass, some information on the ornaments and furniture of our early churches.

First, then, as to ornaments, strictly so called. There are few parts of an ecclesiastical building which may not be made, we do not say merely susceptible of ornament, but in themselves ornamental; roof, pillars, walls,

windows, floors, arches, capable as most of them are of an indefinite variety and combination of form, may each tend to the harmonious and solemn effect so common in old, so rare, alas! in new churches. We shall say nothing of pictures, first, because there is, right or wrong, a considerable prejudice against them; and secondly, because, except as altar pieces, we do not think that the lights and shadows of churches afford fit places for their display. No one who has seen the paintings of Murillo in the cathedral of Seville, can fail to notice how entirely they are lost. The eye is wearied with the details of that transcendent edifice, and will not rest on anything merely accessory; the light falls upon them in an unfortunate and inartistic manner, and the windows being *all* richly painted, mingle their own colours with those of the canvas; in a word, were there no other objection this one would be sufficient, that pictures and painted windows are altogether inconsistent one with another. Statues might, indeed, be well introduced, and he would merit something of the age who would fill up the vacant niches in our churches with figures such as those which once adorned them. Between the windows of the clerestory in the church of St. Mary Magdalene are canopied niches, once occupied by statues of the apostles; and in the second pillar on the north side of the centre aisle is a superbly decorated niche of the same character, in which once stood the figure of St. Mary Magdalene herself. Now seeing as we do that admirals and generals, with or without apparel, captains, colonels, majors, and lieutenants, in the same variety of costume, and attended by every species of heathen god, and personified Christian and Pagan virtue, sea-dogs, sea-horses, tritons, and Britannia in every possible attitude, adorn (?) the interior of that particularly Protestant church, St. Paul's, in London, there seems but little room to object to the restoration of such as those which once looked solemnly down on the worshippers at St. Mary's, and the more so when we find at St. Paul's the figures of the apostles, though here, it is true, banished to the outside.

Another ornament which is in admirable keeping with the character and proportions of a Gothic church, is the painting or staining of the windows. The earliest stained glass known to exist in this country is that in the aisles of the choir at Canterbury, and it is no less remarkable for its effect and beauty than for its antiquity. Like all very ancient stained glass, it may be known by the extraordinary depth and brilliancy of its ruby and blue tints, which in later times have never been equalled, and scarcely ever approached. It is hardly possible, under ordinary circumstances, to judge of the enormous amount of colouring matter burnt into the ancient stained glass; the modern admits as much, or nearly as much, light as the plain, while an ordinary room with windows of ancient stained glass would be

scarcely, even in the brightest noon-tide, light enough for its usual purposes. It is in such buildings as *La Sainte Chapelle* at Paris, or King's College Chapel at Cambridge, where tall clustered columns support the roof, and where the walls appear composed of stained glass, that its power of subduing light may be seen and felt at once. That which has been already noticed at Canterbury must be referred to the early part of the twelfth century. It can scarcely be said that the art ever made progress, for the earliest are among the best specimens extant; but as years advanced, attempts were made gradually to depict scenes on a larger scale, and to make first a complete picture in a window, and then a series of pictures in the windows of a building: but from all that we have left to us, we are induced to think that this can be done only under very rigid restrictions, and that that window painting is of the most effect in which the architectural features of the window itself are most strictly observed. We need not say how utterly ridiculous was the attempt made in several instances to transfer the paintings of West to the windows of churches: had the paintings themselves been worth the transfer, the plan must have failed to produce a good effect; and as it is, they do but provoke a most unfavourable comparison with the spirit in which the monkish artists executed *their* work. The roof, as well as the windows of a church may be rendered subservient to ornament as well as to use—whether it be of stone, as most of our cathedrals, and the inimitable chapel of King's College, Cambridge, or whether it be of wood, of which a very beautiful specimen exists in St. Mary Magdalene's Church—religious symbols, portraits of illustrious persons, armorial bearings, richly blazoned, all find their appropriate place in such a roof, and the study of such details has afforded many a valuable hint to some of our best antiquaries. The discussion, however, of roofs would lead us far from our intended path, and we shall, therefore, proceed in the next place to make a few observations on the flooring of churches, as to the mode in which they may be made subservient, like the roofs and windows, to ornament. With regard to appearance, which is all with which, at present, we have to do, it evidently matters nothing what is the material used, provided the requisite effect be obtained; hence, encaustic tiles, a covering of elastic gum, marble, brass, may be in turn advocated, without interfering with our subject; but we must more especially notice the ancient brasses so frequently found let into the walls and flooring of old churches, and which have, when well kept, so peculiarly excellent an effect. These monuments of antiquity, long neglected, have lately called forth a newly-awakened interest, and the Cambridge Camden Society has done much, both to make them known and to rescue them from destruction.

Hitherto we have spoken only of the essential parts of the building, we shall now speak of that which is more especially ornament, such as corbels, brackets, the termination of arches in heads or foliage,—of these latter there are some admirable specimens, though of modern workmanship, in the church of St. Mary Magdalene, particularly the portraits of Henry VII. and Archbishop Warham, which make the terminations of the chancel arch. Not unfrequently the water-courses of old ecclesiastical buildings are enriched with grotesque figures, sometimes representing a chase; on those of Henry VII.'s Chapel, for instance, are represented demons in all possible shapes of horror and absurdity, hunting human souls. Another mode in which grotesque figures are used, is in what are called gargoyle, or water-spouts; these frequently present the figure of a man vomiting, or something else equally delicate and pleasing.

We now pass to the furniture of churches, and this naturally divides itself into that which was in use before the Reformation and is now obsolete, and that which prevails in our own day. The first consists chiefly of a high altar and subordinate altars, aumries, piscinae, sedilia, Easter sepulchres, rood-lofts, reredos, hagioscopes, sanete-bells, nieches, brackets, and screens; the second of pulpits, desks, lecterns, communion table, with its appropriate plate and linen, fonts, and eagles.

First, then, as to the more ancient or high altars; these were ordered, in the reign of Edward VI., to be broken down, and Ridley describes himself as breaking down a portion of the wall behind the high altar at St. Paul's: and at the same time orders were given that all altars should be taken away, and a "decent table" provided, to be placed in the middle of the church. Custom has gradually, without legislative enactment, replaced the table at the east end of the church, and railed it in from the rest of the chancel.^(a) At the same time as the high altars were demolished, the chancels themselves, formerly raised two or three steps above the rest of the church, were generally levelled, so that we now seldom find the chancel raised more than one step above the floor of the nave. In addition to the high altar (raised that the elevated host^(b) might be seen by the whole congregation, and gorgeously decorated, according to the means and taste of the parishioners and clergy) there were subordinate altars to favourite saints, where incense was burnt and candles kept lighted by pious votaries: these were all destroyed at the time of the Reformation, though the places in which they stood are

^(a) That part of the church in which the chief religious offices are performed. The word is derived from the Latin, *canelli*, railings or lattice-work, because it was separated by a screen from the rest of the church.

^(b) The sacrament, from the Latin, *hostia*, a victim.

plainly traceable by the neighbouring piscinae and other similar indications; thus there was an altar without doubt at the eastern end of the southern aisle in St. Mary's Church. The more ancient altars were, for the most part, slabs of granite, and though in the year 1599 a great number were destroyed, and nearly all that remained at the time of the great rebellion fell beneath the sacrilegious hands of the Puritans, yet the brackets on which they were supported are occasionally, though rarely, to be found, and the altars themselves have sometimes been resened from the position of flag-stones in the chaneel; they may be distinguished by the crosses carved at the corners and in the centre, which crosses were, it is however to be observed, turned to the earth when the altars themselves were used for paving stones. The most striking ornament of an old church is the chaneel screen, and of these we have some remaining of great beauty; those which are called rood-screens are also sometimes of stone, but more often of carved wood. There is a remarkable stone screen in Broughton Church, Oxon, and a wooden one of great antiquity in that of Stanton Harecourt, in the same county. The date of such screens is usually of the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries, but there is room for belief that even in the thirteenth century they began to be introduced. During Lent a veil was hung over the screen, to prevent the congregation assembled in the church from seeing what was carried on in the chaneel during that season of mysteries. The chief use, however, of the screen was to support the rood-loft, a gallery running across the church, and approached by a stairease at one side: these rood-lofts are rarely of earlier date than the fourteenth century, and they are still more unusual to find remaining than the screens which formed a part of them; yet in Somersetshire are some in a considerable state of perfection; we would especially instance that at Long Sutton and that at Kingsbury Episopi. The use of the rood-loft was to support the holy rood, from which its name, together with such other images, principally those of St. John and the Virgin, as the church might possess. The rood itself was a cross with the figure of the Saviour upon it, sometimes of the size of life, and exhibiting considerable skill and beauty of workmanship. On each side of the rood were the images of St. John and the Virgin Mary, represented as in attendance on the cross, and the appearance of the whole, the rood with its loft and screen dividing the church from the chaneel, was very striking. Another screen is occasionally met with, called the reredos, or altar-screen, a back to the altar of carved stone or wood, and sometimes exceedingly rich in its decorations. These nearly all fell victims to puritanical rage; they are now, therefore, very uncommon: perhaps the most beautiful of those which still remain in this country is that in the Lady

Chapel, Southwark, which is exquisitely carved in stone; the whole building has lately been carefully restored, so that the reredos may there be seen to great advantage. We shall say but little about organ screens, for in most of our cathedrals the organ occupies the place of the ancient rood, and the old rood-screen serves as an organ-screen. In parish churches, when the different position of the organ prohibits such an appropriation, the organ-screen is generally constructed so as to harmonise as little as possible with the details of the church: if the latter be early English, the organ-screen is usually composite, with wreaths of oaken flowers and bulls' heads, trumpets placed saltier-wise and the *king's* arms (those of George II. or George III.) in gold and emblazonry. Here too is the favoured spot for announcing donations of bread and coals to the poor, *beautifications* (!) of the church, and the illustrious names of Messrs. "John Hun and William Vandal, churchwardens," all in gold, till a new era substitutes the names of other decorators in their turn.

Of niches and brackets we have already spoken, and we, therefore, pass on to the *piscina*,^(a) a small arched recess, sometimes double, as a beautiful



example in the chapel of Jesus College, Cambridge, exhibits it, but more usually single, as the two instances in the church of St. Mary Magdalene. The position of the *piscina* is various, but it is most generally found at the eastern end of the southern wall, and at the right hand of the altar in the east wall. They have circular orifices at the bottom, and drains communicating with the outside of the church, and their use was for pouring away the water used in rinsing the chalice, and washing the priests' hands; hence they are also called water-drains, stoops, or lavatories. A great variety of style will be found in *piscinae*, the head of some being richly decorated; in other cases they are merely holes in the wall. *Piscinae* were first introduced into our churches about the year 1190.

When a recess without a drain is found at the right hand of the altar it is called a *crecence*, and its use was to place thereon the elements before

^(a) A fish pond, from the sacred symbol, *ixθος*, a fish.

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consecration at the Eucharist. In some churches, though not often, we may observe in the north wall, and within the altar rails, a recess, low and shallow, under a flat arch, and sometimes highly decorated. This recess is called the Easter sepulchre, and its use was to receive the elements consecrated on Maunday Thursday, until the celebration of high mass on Easter Sunday. It is possible to imagine that the Easter sepulchre was used in other rites typical of the resurrection. The most beautiful now remaining is in the church of Heckington, in Lincolnshire. These must not be confounded with the smaller aumbry, or locker, which is usually a plain square or triangular-headed recess in the north wall, occasionally fitted with a shelf and door, and intended to hold the church plate, &c. It is but rarely that aumbries exhibit any attempt at decoration; they may be best known by their position, and are sometimes found set diagonally in the north-east corner.

The sedilia, or seats, form a not unfrequent and very striking feature in the decoration of the chancel. They are generally three in number, either of equal height, or descending in regular gradation towards the west, and when they occur they are found invariably in the south wall, a little to the west of the piscina; in some instances, canopies of exquisite workmanship over the arches by which they are surmounted mark the taste and the wealth of the builder; while in others there is no more than a horizontal moulding. The usual number is, as we have already said, three; but there are sometimes, in large churches, more: thus, at Rothwell Church, Northamptonshire, there are four, and at Southwell Minster, five. There are also small churches with two, as at Milton, Kent; or even one, as at Chalk Church, in the same county; but three was the more usual number, for the priest, the deacon, and the sub-deacon. Sedilia are rarely of greater antiquity than the thirteenth century, previous to which period the priest sat on a chair, or stool, as at present.

We may just mention a few other peculiarities in the chancels of some of our older churches. The first of these is a small square hole in the extreme east end of the southern wall, placed almost close to the ground, and resembling an aumbry; the second, an arched recess on the western side of the sedilia, resembling them in appearance, but of greater width, and surmounted with an arch of a different character; the third is a small low window close to the chancel arch, usually stopped up with stone or brick, but visible from the outside. A corresponding one may, in a few rare instances, be discovered in the northern wall.

Lastly, we come to the hagioscope, or, as it has been called, squint. This is, or rather these are, small oblong slits in the chancel wall, in order

that those sitting in the nave or transepts might see the host when elevated, the word signifies *to see what is holy*. The hagioscope itself is of rare occurrence, so much so, indeed, as to be omitted in the "Glossary of Architecture," and when it is found, its purpose is not often understood. We cannot dismiss the host and its elevation without noticing the sancte-bell. Outside the church, at the eastern end of the nave, the observer may sometimes see a small turret, like a dove cote, which occasionally, though not often, contains a bell; this is called the sancte-bell, and it was rung at the elevation of the host, in order that those without might fall down on their knees and worship the elements, now changed, according to the superstitious creed of Rome, into the real body and blood of Christ.

The more modern furniture and ornaments of churches will require but a short notice. A large volume might be written upon fonts and their covers: all that we shall say here will have reference to the proper situation of the font in a church; it should be near the porch, to typify that by baptism is the entrance into the church, and those, therefore, who place the font in the body of the church, or still more, who advance it to the chaneel, not merely offend against ecclesiastical propriety, but symbolically against sound doctrine. Of pulpits, too, we shall say but little; some of the most ancient and beautiful in this country are of stone, and others, of later date, of carved wood, by Gibbons, and other equally skilful, if not equally celebrated, artists of that time. The desk had its origin at the Reformation, and as the object of it was to put the officiating minister in such a position with regard to those whose devotions he was to lead, it is obvious that its usual situation is that which is at once most effective and most correct. In some churches we see two pulpits of equal height erected, one for the reader, and one for the preacher; and in others the still worse arrangement, by which pulpit, reading desk, and clerk's desk, all are so placed as to prevent the congregation from either hearing or seeing the minister during the communion service. Reading desks did, as we have already said, originate at the Reformation, but lecterns and eagles, for the reading of the lessons, may be found of much earlier date.

Of the communion table, with its plate and linen, we have left ourselves no space to say much, and the rarity of ancient plate makes it less necessary to enlarge. In Somersetshire there exists some of that which has escaped



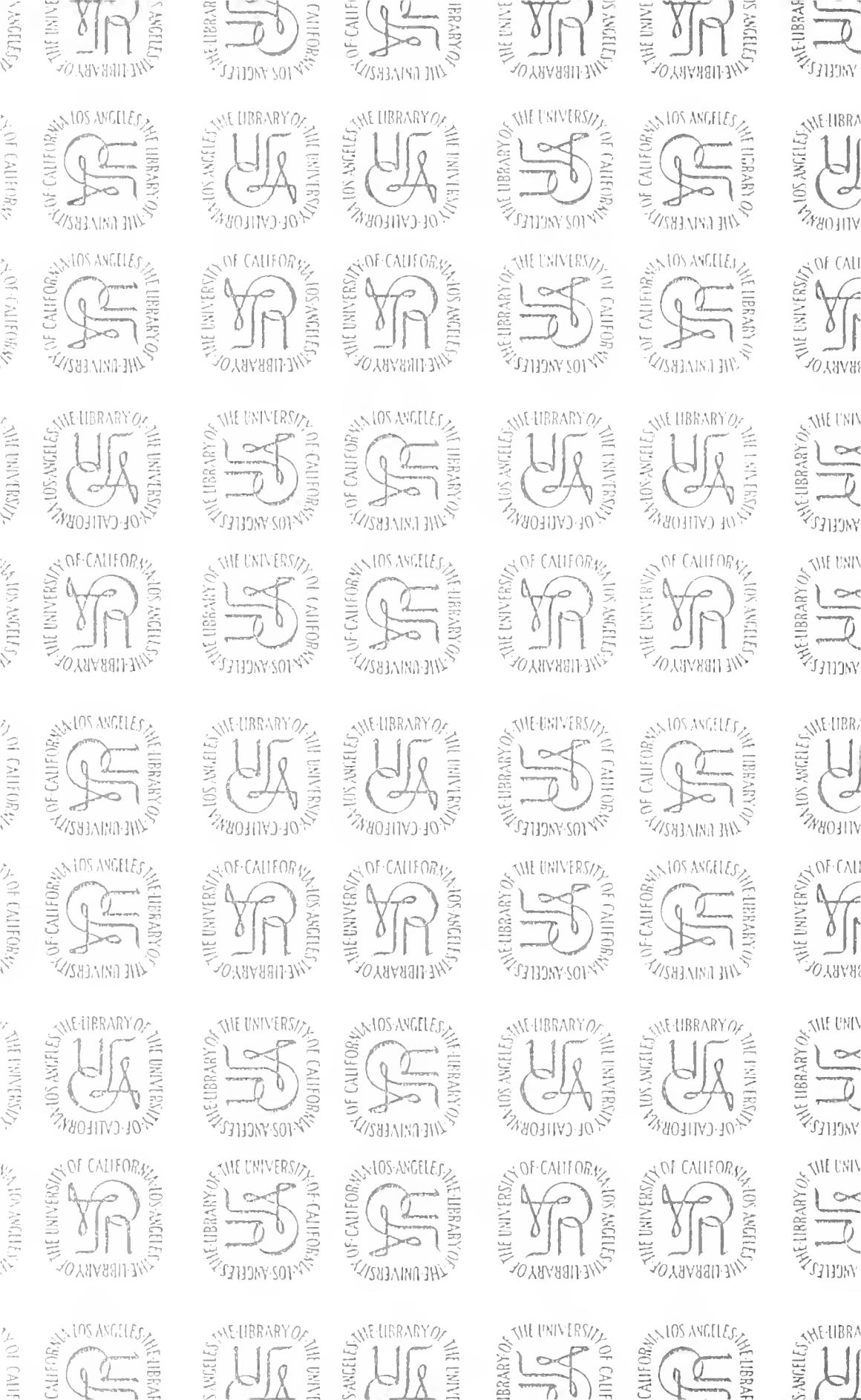
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the ravages of the great rebellion, and we may especially notice a chalice with a cover belonging to the church at Ilminster.

Let us indulge a hope that these few remarks may be the means, to however small an extent, of bringing the subject of ancient church ornaments before the notice of some who may have it in their power to stop the besom of destruction, already "reforming away so many of our ecclesiastical antiquities" from the face of the earth.



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